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Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Table of Contents

Supersedes: **Child Care 1-1 (5/01/05)**

OVERVIEW OF BEST BEGINNINGS CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS

1-1	**Table of Contents**	9-1-06
1-2	**Human & Community Services Division Organizational Chart**	9-1-06
1-3	**Definitions**	5-1-05
1-4	**Provider Rates** ❑ Market Rate Survey ❑ District Rates	9-1-06
1-4a	**Children with Special Needs** ❑ ADA – Reasonable Accommodations ❑ CCR&R Role ❑ Individual Child Care Plan ❑ Limits on Rate Approval Amounts ❑ One Time Expenses	9-1-06
1-5	**Child Care Sliding Fee Scale Effective May 1, 2005** ❑ Family Income Eligibility Thresholds ❑ Co-payment Obligation	9-1-06
1-6	**Child Eligibility** ❑ Residency ❑ Household ❑ Age ❑ Child's Relationship to Provider	5-1-05
1-7	**Parent Eligibility - Overview** ❑ Overview of Eligibility Categories	5-1-05

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Table of Contents

1-8 **Provider Eligibility - Overview** 5-1-05
- Provider Maintains Registration, License or Payment Number
- Provider Licensed by Another Entity
- Provider Maintain Sign-In/Sign-Out Records
- Provider Must Allow Access to Facility & Records
- Provider Must Submit Invoices Within 60 Days
- Provider Rights and Responsibilities

1-9 **Confidentiality** 9-1-06
- HIPAA
- Reporting Abuse & Neglect, 1-866-820-KIDS (5437)
- Contractors
- Release to Law Enforcement
- Release to Participant
- Authorizations to Release Information
- Child Care Providers

1-10 **Timely Notices and Termination** 5-1-05
- Reasons for Termination
- Notice when State Reduces Benefits
- Reasons for No Advance Notice

1-11 **Fair Hearing Process** 5-1-05
- Right to Fair Hearing

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Table of Contents

NON-TANF CHILD CARE ELIGIBILITY

2-1 **Application Process** 9-1-06
- Eligibility Begin-Date
- Limitations of Best Beginnings Scholarship
- Application Processes
- CCR&R Processing
- Waiting List
- Presumptive Eligibility

2-2 **Household Requirements** 9-1-06
- Household Membership – Required & Optional
- Common Law Marriage
- Joint Custody Arrangements
- Temporary Absence from Household
- Child Support Requirement

2-3 **Non-TANF Activity Requirements** 9-1-06
- Employed (Meeting Work Requirement)
- Parent with a Severe Disability
- Employed & Attending School
- Teen Parents

2-4 **Household Income** 9-1-06
- Family Shall Obtain All Income
- Verifying Unearned Income
- Verifying Earned Income
- Self Employment Income
- Determining Business Expenses

2-5 **Prospective Budgeting** 9-1-06
- Anticipating
- Factoring
- Averaging
- Annualizing

2-6 **Income Evaluation Table** 5-1-05

TANF CHILD CARE ELIGIBILITY & COORDINATION

3-1 **OPA, WoRC & CCR&R Coordination** 9-1-06
- Qualifying Families
- Child-Only Grant
- Qualified Provider
- OPA/WoRC Refer Families to CCR&R
- WoRC Manages Child Care
- Loss of Eligibility
- TANF Sanctions
- Dependent Care Disregard
- Co-payment Requirement
- Affordable, Appropriate, Suitable Care within a Reasonable Distance
- FIA Codes

3-2 **Tribal TANF Coordination** 5-1-05

- Application and CCUBS processing
- Qualifying Families and Children Participating in Tribal TANF
- Qualified Child Care Provider
- CCR&R Manages Child Care
- Re-certifying Child Care for Tribal TANF Participants
- Loss of Eligibility
- Sanctions
- Co-Payment Requirement
- Affordable, Appropriate, Suitable Care within a Reasonable Distance
- Serving the Family

CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES CHILD CARE MANAGEMENT

4-1 **CFSD & CCR&R Coordination** 5-1-05

- Eligible Providers
- Child Care Referral – Electronic Form
- Four Options Under Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship
- CFSD Child Care Options on CAPS
- Foster Children

5 – RESERVED

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Table of Contents

SERVING THE FAMILY

6-1 Child Care Referrals 9-1-06
- Referral Process
- Basic Referrals
- Enhanced Referrals
- Unbiased Referrals
- Child Care Need Form
- Provider Updates
- NACCRRAware

6-2 Legally Unregistered Providers 9-1-06
- Qualifications
- Application Process
  - Background Checks
  - Fingerprint Options
- CCR&R Process
- Denials

6-2a Legally Unregistered Providers Medication Administration 9-1-06

6-3 Issuing the Child Care Certification Plan 5-1-05
- General Rule
- Maximum Number of Hours
- Extending Child Care Hours
- No Need for Child Care
- Parent Unavailable
- Respite Care Not Covered
- Sleep Time
- Study Time

6-4 **Co-payment Requirements** 5-1-05
- Co-payment Required for Eligibility
- Cost of Care is Less Than Co-payment
- Disputed Co-payments
- Notice of Unpaid Co-payment
- Arrangements in Lieu of Cash

6-5 **Change Reporting** 5-1-05
- Change Reporting Requirements
- CCR&R Evaluates the Change
- What-If Scenario
- Failure to Change Report
- Continuation of Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship
- Increase of Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship
- Decrease of Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship
- Loss of Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship
- Change in Child Care Provider

6-6 **Absent Days & Continuity of Care Policies** 9-1-06

- Absent Day Policies
  - Certified Enrollment
  - Holding-the-Slot
  - Holidays
  - Suspending a Case
- Continuity of Care Policies
  - Fill-the-Gap
  - Grace Period
  - Jury Duty
  - Medical Appointments
  - Medical Emergency

6-7 **Invoice & Payment Processes** 5-1-05

- Sign-in/Sign-Out Sheets
- Actual Daily Attendance
- Accurate Invoices
- Timely Invoices
- Payment Address
- Batch Processing
- Direct Deposit
- Online Invoicing
- Recertification Review

6-8 **Investigating and Auditing** 9-1-06

- Indicators to Initiate an Investigation
- Steps to Complete an Investigation
- Providers Must Receive Due Process
- Auditing Invoices at Recertification
- Auditing Internet Invoices

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Table of Contents

6-9 **Corrections & Overpayments** 9-1-06
- Underpayment
- Penalties for a Willful Action
- Overpayment
- Agency Error Results in Overpayment Sent to Parent
- Calculating an Over Claim or an Overpayment
- Provider Overpayment
- Household Overpayment
- Negotiating a Repayment
- Overpayment Process Guide
- Accounts Receivable

6-10 **Table of Eligibility Related Forms** 9-1-06

6-11 Reserved

6-12 Reserved

6-13 **Resources for CCR&R Eligibility Specialists** 9-1-06

BEST BEGINNINGS QUALITY INITIATIVES

7-1	**Tiered Reimbursement for Quality Care** ❑ Accreditation ❑ Rate Structure ❑ Star Rating System	9-1-06
7-2	**Career Development**	5-1-05
7-3a	**Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver** ❑ Infant Toddler Caregiver Certification	5-1-05
7-3b	**Infant Toddler Mini Grant** ❑ Application Process ❑ CCUBS Process	5-1-05
7-3c	**Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend** ❑ Application Process ❑ CCUBS Process	5-1-05
7-4	**Provider Grants** ❑ Categories of Grants ❑ Who May Apply ❑ How to Apply ❑ Maximum Grant Awards ❑ Special Requirements	5-1-05
7-4a	**Mini Grants** ❑ Who May Apply ❑ How to Apply ❑ Maximum Grant Awards	5-1-05
7-5a	**Merit Pay 1**	9-1-06

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Table of Contents

7-5b	Higher Education Merit Pay	9-1-06
7-5c	Infant Toddler Merit Pay	9-1-06
7-6	Provider Training	5-1-05

ADDENDUM - CHILD CARE LICENSING (Quality Assurance Division)

815-1	Introduction to Registration	1/98
815-2	Definitions - Child Day Care Licensing	2/01
815-3	Day Care Registration Procedure	2/01
815-4	Day Care Orientation and Training	2/01
815-5	Registration Monitoring Process	3/01
815-6	Checklist for Family Home, Infant Care & Group Home	2/01
815-8	Day Care Center Licensing Procedure	3/01
815-9	Renewal Procedures for Day Care Facilities	6/01
815-10	Negative Registration/Licensing Action	7/03
815-12	Drop-in Care Protocol	10/99
815-13	Extended Licensing Procedure	5/01
815-15	Complaint Policy	6/01
815-17	Locking the Door Policy	1/03

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

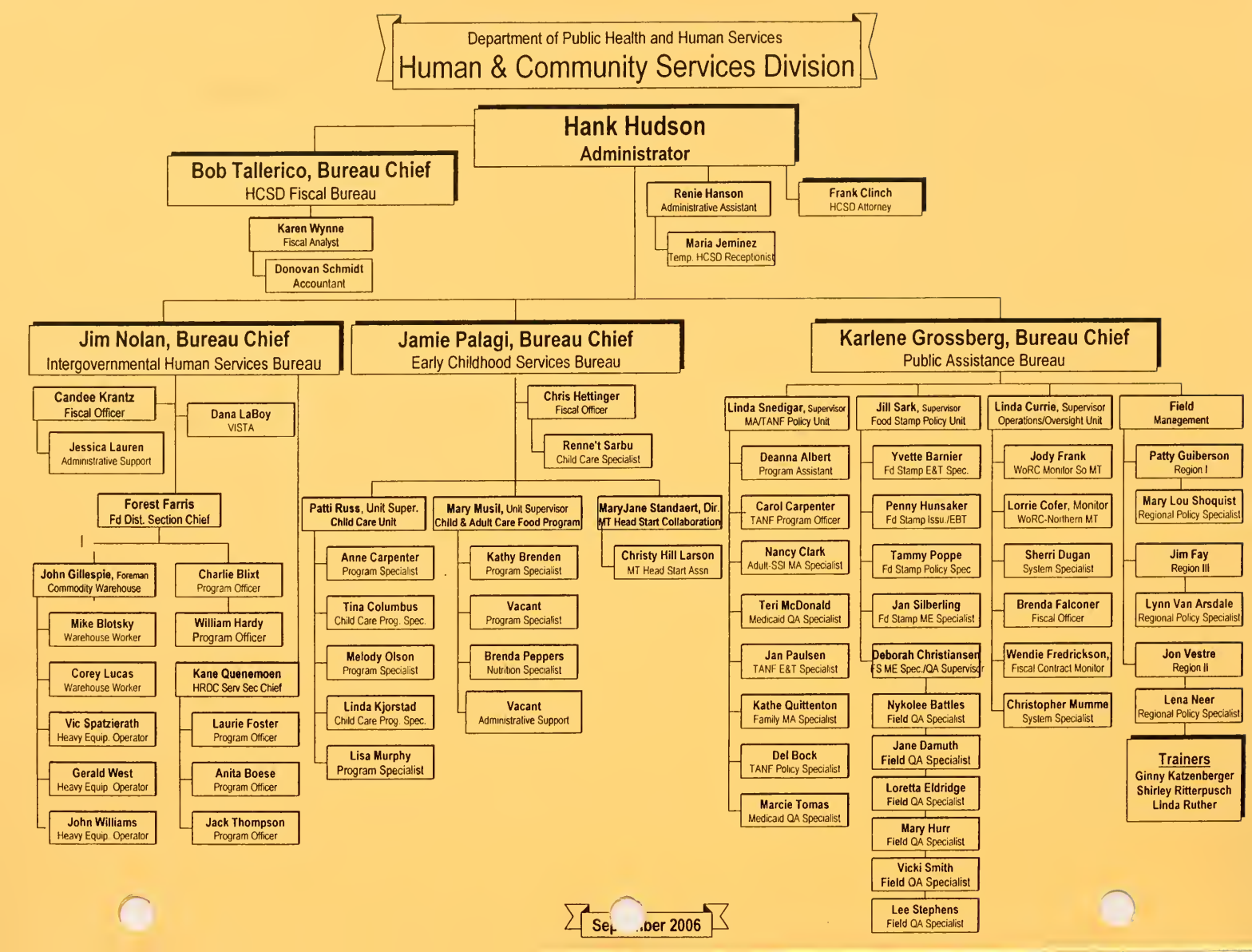
Subject:
Human & Community Services Division Organizational Chart

Supersedes: **Child Care 1-2 (5/01/05)**

The DPHHS Human and Community Services Division organizational chart is on the back of this page.

Department of Public Health and Human Services

Human & Community Services Division



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Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Definitions**

Supersedes: **Child Care 1-3 (7/01/03)**

References: **Section 52-2-703, MCA.**
Sections 37.80.101, .102, .103, .201, .202, .205, .206, .301, .302, .305, 306, .315, .316, .501, 37.95.304 ARM
45 CFR 98.2 and 98.33
Child Care Fund State Plan, Appendix 2.

A

Absent Parent, means a natural or adoptive parent, or stepparent who is separated or divorced from the child's residential parent, or who was never married to the residential parent. An absent parent does not share family income, resources, or obligations with their child's household, except by paying child support or alimony. In contrast, see 'Parents Living Apart,' below.

Administrative Review is the first step in the Fair Hearing process. During an administrative review, a person with a complaint has an opportunity to have his/her case examined by the ECSB supervisor, in a formal attempt to resolve a grievance prior to a Fair Hearing, as outlined in Section 1-11.

Adverse Actions include:

- a failure of the Department or of the CCR&R agency to provide a parent an opportunity to make an application or reapplication for a child care scholarship;
- a failure of the Department or of the CCR&R agency to act with reasonable promptness on a parent's application for a child care scholarship (reasonable promptness is 30 days, see Section 2-1);
- a failure of the Department or of the CCR&R agency to provide timely or adequate notice when an adverse action will be taken;
- an action by the Department or the CCR&R agency denying, suspending, reducing, or terminating a scholarship of a parent or payment(s) to a provider, or an action by the Department demanding repayment of an overpayment;
- an action by the CCR&R to deny, suspend, reduce, revoke, or terminate licensure, registration, certification, or enrollment of a provider or to fail

to renew certification, enrollment, licensure, or the registration certificate of a provider who has applied for renewal (pertains to licensed/registered providers and to the LUP provider).

Affordable Child Care means the total parental (caretaker, relative, or person acting in loco parentis) co-payment and 'above and beyond' obligation does not exceed 25% of gross family income.

Application Date means the date the child care resource and referral agency receives and date stamps the completed application form, the 'Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Application' (DPHHS-HCS/CC-010) or the 'Legally Unregistered Provider and/or In-home Care Application for State Payment Only ' (DPHHS-HCS/CC-087). The application date establishs the beginning of the time span in which the application process must be completed.

Appropriate Child Care means the child care provider must meet applicable state licensing standards.

At-Home Relative Care means care that is provided by a person living with the child who is a relative of the child in one of the following ways:

- Aunt or Uncle;
- Grandparent; or
- Great-grandparent.

Attending (a job training or educational program) - A person is considered to be attending, whether part-time or full-time, if they remain in good standing as defined by the institution, with either the job training or education program in which they are enrolled. Child care is allowed for scheduled class time and the time necessary to commute between the parent's home, the child care facility and the education or training facility.

C

Certification Plan means a notice issued by the Child Care Resource & Referral agency which authorizes child care assistance and specifies the number of children for whom child care assistance is authorized, the number of hours per week for which assistance is authorized, the number of months for which authorization is granted, the name of the child care provider, and the amount of the monthly copayment which the parent must pay to the provider. Certification plans are subject to change based on circumstances affecting eligibility or the provision of child care assistance.

Certified Enrollment is intended to assist families to pay child care facilities requiring payment when a full time child is temporarily absent. Certified Enrollment days can only be used for times of temporary absence, including illness, and are limited to 150 hours in a state fiscal year (July 1st through June 30th). A limit of 10 consecutive days of Certified Enrollment can be billed at one time.

Child Care means care for children provided by an adult other than a parent of the children or other person living with the children as a parent, on a regular basis for daily periods of less than 24 hours, whether that care is for daytime or nighttime hours. In addition to the previous defined language found at 52-2-703, MCA, the term also means care to a child up to the age of 13 years, except as indicated otherwise in these rules. The term does not include care by a relative, unless registration or licensure as a day care facility is required to receive payments as provided in 52-2-713, MCA.

Child Care Center means an out-of-home place in which day care is provided to 13 or more children on a regular basis.

Child Care Resource & Referral Agency (CCR&R) or resource and referral agency means the agency or organization with which the department contracts to administer the child care assistance program, including determination of eligibility for child care scholarship assistance, certification of legally unregistered providers to receive payments, and payments to providers.

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

Section:
Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

CHILD CARE

Subject:
Definitions

Child Care Scholarship means the monthly benefit amount awarded to a qualifying parent for assistance in paying child care costs while they work, work and attend school, or participate in TANF Family Investment Activities/Employability Plan.

Child Care Under the Big Sky (CCUBS) is a child care program management computer system implemented in March 2002. The Oracle based computer system integrates licensing, subsidy, and contract management functions.

Child Protective Services (CPS) Child Care is available for children in care because of the danger of neglect or abuse. The need for protective services child care is determined by community social workers.

Child with Special Needs means a child who is age 18 or younger who requires additional assistance because of an emotional or physical disability and/or cognitive delay that is verified by medical records or other appropriate documentation such as written verification of the physical, emotional, or mental disability from the appropriate authority.

Combination Full/Part Time Child Care means care provided in excess of 10 hours per day. The full-time child care rate is paid for the first 10 hours; additional hours beyond 10 hours/day are paid for at the hourly rate up to 16 hours/day. If the certification plan specifies service exceeding 16 hours of care during a calendar day, the state will pay twice the daily rate for each day in which care exceeds 16 hours.

Common Law Marriage - A common law marriage has all of the same rights & duties as a ceremonial marriage. Therefore, if the income and availability of a stepparent, married by ceremony is considered, then the same applies to a step parent married by common law. There is no "benchmark" at which a couple is deemed married by common law. However, if they present themselves husband and wife, then they are married by common law for all intents and purposes.

Copayment means the portion of child care expenses which the parent is responsible for paying to the child care provider in accordance with the sliding

scale as established in Section 1-5.

D

Dependent Child means a child under the age of 18 who lives in the household of a natural or adopted parent, foster care parent, or an adult serving in loco parentis.

E

Education Program refers to a program that is accredited by the State of Montana. Educational programs include, but are not limited to, vocational-technical schools, business colleges, junior colleges, universities, and/or special classes, which may be classified as "employment related training. "

F

Fair Hearing - A proceeding in which a determination of legal rights, duties, or privileges of a party is required by law. Parties affected by an adverse action must send a written request to the Department for a fair hearing in a timely manner. See Fair Hearing Process, as outlined in Section 1-11.

Family Child Care Home means a private residence in which day care is provided to three to six children on a regular basis. In addition to the previous defined language found at 52-2-703, MCA, the term also means: a day care facility providing care to no more than three children under two years of age unless care is provided for infants only.

- For facilities providing care only for infants, family day care home means a place in which child care is provided for up to four infants. No other children shall be in attendance.

Fill-the-Gap allows WoRC Case Managers and CCR&R Eligibility Specialists to provide a child care scholarship to a TANF family who needs child care because circumstances have changed and the child care disregard has not been prospected. See Continuity of Care, as outlined in Section 6-6.

Full-time Child Care means six to ten hours per day and thirty or more hours per week on a regular basis.

G

Good Cause Not To Cooperate with Child Support Enforcement means a parent may be exempted from the requirement due to endangerment issues. See Non-TANF Household Requirements, as outlined in Section 2-2.

Good Cause to Request a Grace Period means a parent must demonstrate that he/she has sound reasons for temporarily not complying with the minimum hourly work requirement. By demonstrating good cause, families may request a grace period temporarily extending the child care scholarship eligibility period while they look for new employment. See Continuity of Care, as outlined in Section 6-6.

Grace Period - Families who lose employment, therefore fail to meet the minimum hourly work requirement, may apply to receive child care for 30 days, if they are looking for work. See Continuity of Care, as outlined in Section 6-6.

Group Child Care Home means a private residence or other structure in which day care is provided to seven to twelve children on a regular basis. In addition to the previous defined language found at 52-2-703, MCA, the term also means a day care facility providing care to seven to twelve children with no more than six children under two years of age, unless care is provided for infants only.

- For facilities providing care only for infants, group day care home means a place in which child care is provided for up to eight infants. No other children shall be in attendance.

H

Household means a family unit living together, related by marriage or parentage. Unrelated individuals may choose to be considered part of the household for child care eligibility purposes. See Child Eligibility and Parent Eligibility, as outlined in Section 2-2.

I

Infant means a child age 0 through 23 months old. For the purpose of child care scholarship rates, the child moves from the 'infant rate' to the 'child (2+) rate' on their second birthday.

Intact Family means a household with two parents who may not be living

together for a specific reason, but the family considers themselves one unit. Income and availability to care for the children are to be considered for both of the parents in determining eligibility.

Invoice is a list of daily attendance providers use to bill for child care scholarship services.

In Loco Parentis means a person who is exercising care and control of the children in place of the parent.

In-Home Relative Caregiver means a person must be related to the child and the relationship to the child must be verified.

J

Job Training and Educational Program is a program designed to assist eligible families to become self-sufficient by providing needed employment-related activities and supportive services. Job training programs include, but are not limited to, WoRC and special classes which may be classified as "employment related training."

L

Legally Unregistered Provider (LUP) means a person providing child care to two separate children of separate families or all of the children in one family and approved by the State for payment purposes. LUPs are not required to be registered or licensed as a child care facility and are not preschool or drop-in facilities, including providers whose child care services are provided in the home of the parents, for which a payment number (PV) has been established.

LUI means a legally unregistered provider caring for children in the parent's home including At-Home Relative Care.

M

Medical Emergency means an unexpected medical condition of an immediate household member which is expected to last less than three months, as verified by a medical doctor. See Continuity of Care, as outlined in Section 6-6.

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Definitions

O

Over Claim means a provider has made a willful action to charge for child care services that were not approved on the Certification Plan or for child care that was not provided.

Over Payment means the provider received payment in excess of what was owed to them. Over payments may result from:

- willful over claim;
- provider error;
- CCR&R error;
- child care that was not approved; or
- child care that was not provided by the caregiver.

P

Parent means a parent by blood, marriage, or adoption and a legal guardian, or other person acting in loco parentis.

Parents Living Apart means the couple considers themselves intact. Income and resources and household obligations are shared, although the individual parents may reside in separate locations. In contrast, see 'Absent Parent', above.

Part-time Child Care means less than six hours per day, billed at an hourly rate or less than 30 hours per week.

Prospective Budgeting means calculating eligibility and the co-payment amount by using the best estimate of the income and circumstances that are expected to exist in the future. It is ECSB policy to determine eligibility prospectively. Changes should be applied to the future benefit month(s), not the current month. See Prospective Budgeting, as outlined in Section 2-5.

Provider means a licensed or registered child care facility chosen by the parent(s) to care for their child(ren). For the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program this would include LUP/LUIs.

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Definitions

Q

Qualifying Specified Relative is a TANF term, which means any blood relative including those of half-blood, including first cousin, nephews, or nieces, and persons of preceding generations as indicated by prefixes of grand, great, or great-great; stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, and stepsister; those who legally adopt the child or his/her parent as well as the natural and other legally adopted children of such persons; spouses of anyone named in the above groups even after the marriage is terminated by death or divorce; and person(s) acting in loco parentis.

R

Reasonable Distance means:
a. If the family is without either their own (or arranged) transportation and there is no public transportation, then their home or work site must be no more than 1 mile from the child care provider.
b. If the family has their own (or arranged) transportation, their home or work site is within one-hour travel distance, one-way, from the child care provider.

Request for fair hearing is any clearly written statement to DPHHS by the person denied a benefit stating that they want to present their claim to a higher authority. The request must be made within 10 days of receipt of the notice of the Department's adverse action.

Regular Basis means providing day care to children of separate families for any daily periods of less than 24 hours and within three or more consecutive weeks. In addition to the previous defined language found at 52-2-703, MCA, the term also means the child must be in attendance four or more days a week for six hours a day or more.

Required Household Members - (for Non-TANF)

- Natural, adoptive parent or stepparent of an intact family, regardless of living arrangements
- Parent by common law marriage
- Parent joined by a common child
- Minor sibling, age 17 and under, including stepbrother, stepsister, half brother and half sister
- Child receiving Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship

- Child receiving TANF Cash benefits, or other subsidy, as a member of the household

Refer to section 2-2.

Residing with - A child must live in the same household as the parent, other specified relative, or persons acting in loco parentis during the period for which the child care scholarship is requested, as outlined in Section 2-1 of this manual.

S

Scholarship: see Child Care Scholarship.

Scholarship Reimbursement Rates are child care scholarship rates as listed in Section 1-4 of the Child Care Policy Manual, available from the DPHHS Early Childhood Services Bureau.

Special Needs – See Child with Special Needs.

State Rate means the rate established for payment to out-of-state facilities based on the 75th percentile of the Market Rate Survey for the entire state. See Section 1-4.

Suspending a Scholarship means keeping a child care case open temporarily even though a child care scholarship is not needed. A scholarship may be suspended for up to 30 days. If the scholarship is not needed for more than 30 days, the child care scholarship must be closed.

T

Teen Parent means a parent through their 20th birthday who is attending high school. The Non-TANF minimum hourly work requirement is waived for teen parents attending high school. The month following the 20th birthday or the month they leave high school the minimum hourly work requirement applies to their eligibility for a Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child care Scholarship.

Training means instruction that is done to improve the skills or learning of an individual. Examples of training include on-the-job (OJT) training, truck driving, or computer skills training.

Tribal TANF families participate in a tribally run TANF program on their Indian reservation. These families are dually eligible for Tribal Block Grant child care and State CCDF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. If the Tribal TANF program exhausts child care funding or if Tribal Block Grant families find they are covered for additional activities under State CCDF child care rules, families may apply for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

U

Unsuitable Informal Care means care that does not meet applicable state licensing/registration standards, even though it may be the choice of the parents.

W

Willful Action includes, but is not limited to, the making of false or misleading statements, misrepresentations, concealment, or withholding facts and/or information that results in an over claim of scholarship benefits.

Work - An individual is working when s/he performs any paid type of legal labor on either a full or part time basis and has documents to show income received. Self-employment will be determined, in part, by verifying tax returns submitted to the IRS. Evidence of workers' compensation or a waiver from workers compensation is also further proof of employment.

Work-Study – An employment program designed to assist students to earn while attending a post-secondary education program. For the purpose of child care eligibility, work-study earnings are counted as income and work-study hours count toward meeting a minimum hourly work requirement.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Child Care Scholarship Rates**

Supersedes: **Child Care 1-4 (5/01/05)**

References: **Sections 37.80.101, .102, .206, 305, 306, 316 ARM. 52-2-704 & 53-4-601 MCA 45 CFR Part 98.43**

General Rule

The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program is designed to assist low-income families to access and afford quality child care. The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program helps families pay for child care while they are working, working and attending school, attending high school, or participating in TANF FIA/EP activities.

Child Care Provider Market Rate Survey

Every two years, the Early Childhood Services Bureau (ECSB) conducts a market rate survey of child care providers as a basis for recommending district child care rates. The survey is derived from data in the CCUBS computer system.

- If funding is available, the ECSB provides families with a level of Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship that allows access to 75% of the child care facilities in their district. Scholarship rates effective July 1, 2006 are based on the 75th percentile of the June 30, 2006 Market Rate Survey.

ECSB Pays the Lower Rate

Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship payments are made at the CCR&R district scholarship rate or the provider's rate, whichever is lower. Child care providers report their current rates to their CCR&R. The CCUBS computer system compares the provider's rate to the district scholarship rate, and pays the lower of the two rates. Child care providers may not charge the State a higher rate than they charge the public.

Parents are responsible for any over-and-above or additional fees a provider may charge.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Child Care Scholarship Rates**

Provider Shall Report Rate Changes

Participating child care providers must report their current rates for private-pay families to the CCR&R. The rate change will be effective on the date the change was reported to the CCR&R or the date the provider indicates, whichever is later. A change in provider type does not automatically result in a rate change for the provider.

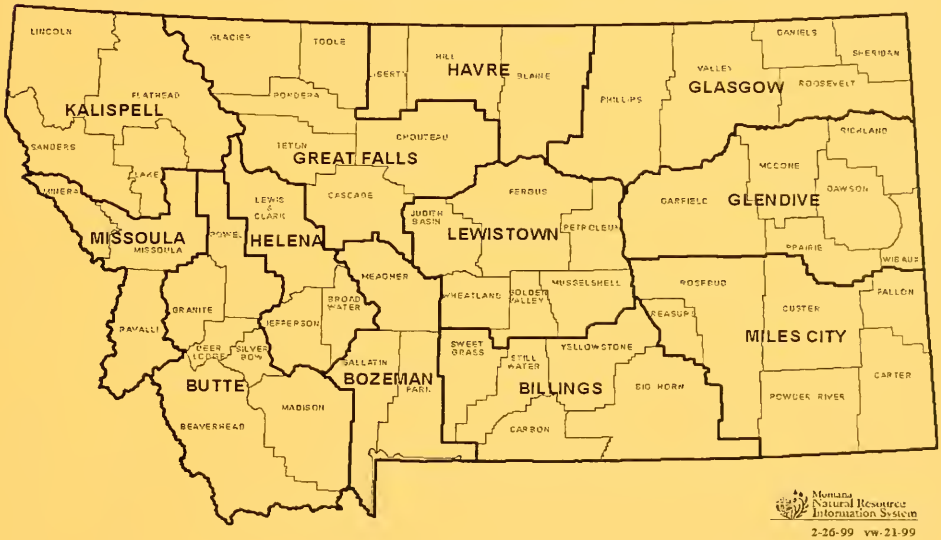
Providers may notify the CCR&R agency in changes to their rates by:

- written notification on an invoice and the date on which the rate is to effective, so long as the adjustment is not requested to start prior to the CCR&R receiving the notice;
- written document to the CCR&R indicating the date the rate should be adjusted, so long as the adjustment is not requested to start prior to the CCR&R receiving the notice;
- child care service plan.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Child Care Scholarship Rates**

Montana Child Care Resource and Referral Locations

Department of Public Health and Human Services



District Child Care Reimbursement Rates

➢ Currently, licensed and registered child care facility district rates are set at the 75th percentile of a June 2006 market rate survey. Scholarship rates are rounded to the nearest ten cents ($0.10).

➢ Since legally unregistered providers (LUPs) are generally not subject to market demands, LUP scholarship rates are set at 75% of the corresponding family rate survey.

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Child Care Scholarship Rates

Child Care Region Name	County Name		Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
Billings - HRDC District 7 CCR&R	Big Horn	Center	$22.00	$4.00	$28.00	$5.00
	Carbon	Family	$20.00	$3.50	$22.00	$4.00
	Stillwater	Group	$21.00	$4.00	$25.00	$4.50
	Sweet Grass	LUP	$15.00	$2.70	$16.50	$3.00
	Yellowstone					

Bozeman - Child Care Connections	Gallatin		Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
	Meagher	Center	$26.60	$5.00	$30.00	$5.10
	Park	Family	$24.00	$3.90	$26.00	$4.30
		Group	$26.00	$5.00	$28.00	$5.00
		LUP	$18.00	$3.00	$19.50	$3.30

Butte - Butte 4C's	Beaverhead		Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
	Deer Lodge	Center	$19.90	$3.20	$20.80	$3.30
	Granite	Family	$20.00	$3.00	$22.00	$3.00
	Madison	Group	$20.20	$3.50	$22.00	$3.50
	Powell	LUP	$15.00	$2.30	$16.50	$2.30
	Silver Bow					

Glasgow - Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc	Daniels		Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
	Phillips	Center	$22.00	$2.60	$23.00	$2.60
	Roosevelt	Family	$18.00	$2.30	$21.60	$2.50
	Sheridan	Group	$18.50	$2.10	$21.40	$2.50
	Valley	LUP	$13.50	$1.80	$16.20	$1.90

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Child Care Scholarship Rates

Glendive - DEAP CCR&R

Dawson
Garfield
Mccone
Prairie
Richland
Wibaux

	Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
Center	$20.10	$2.50	$22.70	$2.60
Family	$18.50	$2.50	$20.00	$2.50
Group	$18.00	$2.30	$20.10	$2.80
LUP	$13.90	$1.90	$15.00	$1.90

Great Falls - Family Connections

Cascade
Chouteau
Glacier
Pondera
Teton
Toole

	Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
Center	$23.00	$4.50	$30.00	$5.50
Family	$20.00	$3.00	$20.00	$3.50
Group	$20.00	$3.50	$21.00	$3.50
LUP	$15.00	$2.30	$15.00	$2.70

Havre - District IV HRDC Child Care Link

Blaine
Hill
Liberty

	Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
Center	$20.00	$3.00	$21.90	$3.30
Family	$20.00	$2.70	$20.00	$3.00
Group	$22.00	$3.30	$22.50	$3.30
LUP	$15.00	$2.10	$15.00	$2.30

Helena - Child Care Partnerships

Broadwater
Jefferson
Lewis and Clark

	Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
Center	$20.00	$5.00	$24.80	$4.40
Family	$18.30	$3.00	$21.00	$3.30
Group	$20.00	$3.80	$24.00	$4.00
LUP	$13.80	$2.30	$15.80	$2.50

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Child Care Scholarship Rates

Kalispell - The Nurturing Center

Flathead
Lake
Lincoln
Sanders

	Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
Center	$23.50	$3.80	$26.00	$4.00
Family	$22.00	$3.50	$23.40	$4.00
Group	$22.00	$3.80	$23.00	$4.00
LUP	$16.50	$2.70	$17.60	$3.00

Lewistown - HRDC District VI Child Care Link

Fergus
Golden Valley
Judith Basin
Musselshell
Petroleum
Wheatland

	Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
Center	$18.80	$3.70	$20.10	$3.80
Family	$18.50	$2.90	$21.70	$3.40
Group	$17.30	$4.00	$19.30	$4.00
LUP	$13.90	$2.20	$16.30	$2.60

Miles City - DEAP CCR&R

Carter
Custer
Fallon
Powder River
Rosebud
Treasure

	Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
Center	$18.30	$2.00	$20.80	$2.30
Family	$19.00	$3.00	$19.80	$3.00
Group	$19.30	$3.00	$20.00	$3.00
LUP	$14.30	$2.30	$14.90	$2.30

Missoula - Child Care Resources

Mineral
Missoula
Ravalli

	Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
Center	$24.00	$3.80	$25.80	$3.60
Family	$20.00	$3.50	$22.00	$3.50
Group	$22.00	$4.00	$24.00	$4.30
LUP	$15.00	$2.70	$16.50	$2.70

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Child Care Scholarship Rates

Out of State Facility Rates

	Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
Center	**$23.50**	**$4.00**	**$28.00**	**$5.00**
Family	**$20.00**	**$3.50**	**$22.00**	**$3.50**
Group	**$22.00**	**$4.00**	**$24.00**	**$4.00**
LUP	**$15.00**	**$2.70**	**$16.50**	**$2.70**

Infant Care Rate

The infant care rates apply to infants from birth through their 23rd month. Rates for children age 2+ apply beginning on the child's second birthday.

Out-of-State Rate

The Out-of-State Rate indicated in the rate table is used when child care occurs in facility located outside Montana.

Children with Special Needs

The scholarship rate for a child with special needs may vary, based upon the care requirements of the child. The scholarship rate is determined on a Special Needs Subsidy Rating Scale. Section 1-4a of this manual outlines the special needs rate application process.

The scholarship rate for a child with special needs under CPS care is requested by the DPHHS Social Worker and must include documentation from a physician, psychologist, or licensed social worker. The special-needs child rate is subject to approval by the DPHHS community social work supervisor. See Section 4-1.

Tiered Reimbursement for Star Providers

Child care providers who qualify for a one-star quality child care rating will receive 110% of the respective child care rate established for the

CCR&R district in which they operate.

Child care providers who qualify for a two-star quality child care rating will receive 115% of the respective child care rate established for the CCR&R district is which they operate.

Payment must be made to the provider when the provider participates in the Tiered Reimbursement program. The 10-15% "quality bonus" is intended to benefit the higher quality child care provider as well as allowing parents access to high quality care.

The Tiered Reimbursement program is detailed in section 7-1 of this child care manual.

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
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STATE OF MONTANA

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PO Box 4210
HELENA, MT 59604-4210

June 14, 2005

TO: Child Care Manual Holders

FROM: Anne Carpenter
DPHHS ECSB

SUBJECT: Bulletin #1 - Child Care Manual
Place this bulletin at the beginning of section 1-4a in the Child Care Manual. This supercedes Section 1.4a p. 2 of 5 #3.

Section: Child Care Manual Section 1-4a
Subject: Children with Special Needs
Effective Date: May 1, 2005

3. The CCR&R Early Childhood Specialist completes the Special Needs Rating Scale to determine the amount of additional special needs subsidy to be paid to the child care provider.

NOTE: The Scoring Worksheet must be approved by the Statewide Inclusion Coordinator for approval prior to entering any increased amount into CCUBS. The amount calculated is entered into the CCUBS system for payment but is approved for a maximum of 60 days while the Child Care Plan is completed.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Children with Special Needs**

Supersedes: **Child Care 1-4 (5/01/05)**

References: **52-2-701 - 704 & 52-2-711 - 713 MCA**
Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM
45 CFR Part 98.20 – 47

General Rule

Families of children with special needs are not placed on a waiting list, thereby guaranteeing a priority status for a child care scholarship. Child care providers are required to make a reasonable accommodation for children with special needs. If care requirements increase the cost of the care, one-time or ongoing costs may be paid from the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that businesses (including child care providers) make "reasonable accommodations" in order to include individuals with disabilities in their place of business. Montana's new policy regarding special needs care and scholarship program must not supplant ADA requirements. Child care programs must first comply with the ADA, then access all other available resources and finally utilize the special needs scholarship enhancement.

Eligibility

Families must meet eligibility requirements for a Best Beginnings child care scholarship, as outlined in Section 1-7 of this manual.

CCR&R Early Childhood Specialist's Role

1. Child Care Resource and Referral Eligibility Specialist assists the family in determining eligibility and completing paperwork required in order to receive a Best Beginnings Scholarship. **As part of the initial eligibility determination process, the CCR&R staff determines if it is appropriate to apply for a special needs scholarship.** This determination is based on:

- The diagnosis and documentation of a disability, which must include written verification of the physical, emotional or mental disability from the appropriate authority;
- The parent's description of the child's needs; or
- Observation based on past difficulty maintaining a child care placement.

In order to qualify for the special needs scholarship program, a child must require special modifications/accommodations in the child care setting and may or may not have an identified disability. The family must provide permission for the CCR&R to pursue a Special Needs Scholarship reimbursement rate by signing the Family Consent Form.

Each CCR&R will designate an Early Childhood Specialist to complete the Special Needs Services process.

2. The CCR&R Early Childhood Specialist schedules and conducts an observation of the child. This observation is ideally completed in the child care facility that the child is attending. This observation should be scheduled with the child care provider, but also the CCR&R Early Childhood Specialist should keep the parent informed when the observation is scheduled.

3. The CCR&R Early Childhood Specialist and the family **complete the Special Needs Rating Scale** to identify the areas in which accommodations are required.

4. The CCR&R Early Childhood Specialist completes the **Scoring Worksheet** to determine the amount of additional special needs subsidy to be paid to the child care provider.

5. NOTE: the Scoring Worksheet provides only provisional approval for the special needs scholarship. Once the amount has been calculated, it must be approved by the Statewide Inclusion Coordinator. The

information may be sent via mail, e-mail or fax. When approval by the Statewide Inclusion Coordinator is received the special needs rate is entered into the CCUBS system for payment but is only approved for 60 days while the Child Care Plan is completed. The Early Childhood Specialist must Case Note this process on the family's Case Event in CCUBS.

Individual Child Care Plan

The family, child care provider, and other professionals working with the child complete the Child Care Plan. This plan provides documentation of the child's needs, identifies required accommodations (and estimated costs), identifies additional resources which may be available, and suggests at least two individuals who could provide additional information if needed.

- ☐ If a child is receiving services from a Developmental Disabilities Service Provider/Child and Family Service Provider, a staff person from that agency should be included in the development of the Plan and the Child Care Plan should be considered an addition to the child's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Educational Program (IEP).

- ☐ If the child is receiving special education services, a representative from the school should be included in the development of the Child Care Plan and it should be considered an addition to the child's IEP.

- ☐ If the child is not currently receiving early intervention or special education services, two things should occur.

    1. First, a referral should be made to the appropriate service provider to ensure that the family is aware of available services and that the child has access to these services.

    2. Second, the CCR&R staff person should assist the family in identifying a qualified professional who can participate in developing the Child Care Plan. This individual may be a physician,

psychologist, social worker, or other professional who knows the child's needs and can provide documentation that special accommodations are required. This may mean some children would initially benefit from the special needs subsidies who do not have any documentation of need. These children may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Child Care Plan is then submitted to the Statewide Inclusion Coordinator **within 45 days of the start of the child care special needs rate.** The Statewide Inclusion Coordinator will compare the Child Care Plan to the Rating Scale to be sure that the Plan supports the need for additional funds.

- ☐ If the Child Care Plan and the Rating Scale provide similar information, the special needs scholarship initially identified is approved.
- ☐ If the Child Care Plan does not identify accommodations that require additional costs and/or there is no documentation for the child's needs, the provisional special needs amount is revoked. The family will receive the typical Best Beginnings scholarship that is identified for their CCR&R District, facility type, and age of child.
- ☐ If the documentation on the Child Care Plan indicates a need for accommodations that are greater than those indicated on the Rating Scale, the Statewide Inclusion Coordinator may make modifications on the Rating Scale to reflect these changes and increase the special needs scholarship amount.

Limits on Rate Approval Amounts

The Statewide Inclusion Coordinator may approve a special needs rate of up to double the regular daily or hourly rate for the CCR&R district, type of facility, and type of care.

The Statewide Inclusion Coordinator will notify the Early Childhood Services

Bureau when a request for a special needs rate is in excess of double the daily or hourly rate on a case-by-case basis.

Entering a Final Amount

The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist will enter a final amount into the CCUBS system for the special needs rate that will support the child care placement within 60 days of the initial approval.

One-Time Expenses

The Individual Child Care Plan may indicate that there is no need for ongoing subsidy support however there may be one-time expenses which will be required in order for the child to be successfully enrolled in a child care program. These costs might include a physical modification, positioning device, special training, or other cost that is unlikely to be required on an ongoing basis.

One-time payments may cover the cost of accommodations that go beyond the "reasonable accommodation" required by the ADA. All other resources need to be accessed before this option can be authorized.

The child care special needs subsidy may be used to cover the cost of one-time payments up to $1,000 per child. The Statewide Inclusion Specialist must approve any request for a one-time payment.

- ⇒ The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist should direct the provider to return receipts for the expense within 30 days or be subject to an overpayment.
- ⇒ Receipts should be forwarded to the ECSB office.
- ⇒ ECSB should be notified in case of any overpayments for one-time payments to providers.

NOTE: Best Beginnings mini-grants may be used to support this need for children who are not eligible for a Special Needs Subsidy.

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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PO Box 4210
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June 14, 2005

TO: Child Care Manual Holders

FROM: Anne Carpenter
DPHHS ECSB

SUBJECT: Bulletin #3 - Child Care Manual
Place this bulletin at the beginning of section 1-5 in the Child Care Manual. This supercedes the sliding fee scale table in section 1-5.

Section: Child Care Manual Section 1-5
Subject: Child Care Sliding Fee Scale
Effective Date: August 1, 2005

The Montana Child Care Sliding Fee Scale has been recalculated, based on 2005 Federal Poverty Guidelines. Income thresholds on the scale have increased, allowing families to have increased income or a lower co-payment beginning in August 2005:

- A family may be eligible for a lower co-payment. (A family, who currently has a $10 co-payment, is not affected by this change.)
- A family may be eligible for a child care scholarship, if their income was slightly above the upper limit of the previous sliding scale.

CCR&R Eligibility specialists shall re-determine August 2005 eligibility for families who have co-payments that exceed $10.

Please insert the August 1, 2005 Montana Child Care Sliding Fee Scale following this page.

Montana Child Care Sliding Fee Scale - Effective August 1, 2005

The monthly co-payment is a percentage of the family's gross monthly income (GMI).

FAMILY SIZE >	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Base Co-pay	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10
TANF GMI + $1	$704	$885	$1,067	$1,250	$1,431	$1,612	$1,794	$1,975	$2,156	$2,338	$2,519	$2,700	$2,881	$3,063	$3,246
1% Co-pay	*$10*	*$10*	*$11*	*$13*	*$14*	*$16*	*$18*	*$20*	*$22*	*$23*	*$25*	*$27*	*$29*	*$31*	*$32*
90% FPG GMI	$962	$1,207	$1,451	$1,696	$1,940	$2,185	$2,429	$2,674	$2,918	$3,163	$3,407	$3,652	$3,896	$4,141	$4,385
2% Co-pay	*$19*	*$24*	*$29*	*$34*	*$39*	*$44*	*$49*	*$53*	*$58*	*$63*	*$68*	*$73*	*$78*	*$83*	*$88*
95% FPG GMI	$1,016	$1,274	$1,532	$1,790	$2,048	$2,306	$2,564	$2,822	$3,080	$3,338	$3,597	$3,855	$4,113	$4,371	$4,629
3% Co-pay	*$30*	*$38*	*$46*	*$54*	*$61*	*$69*	*$77*	*$85*	*$92*	*$100*	*$108*	*$116*	*$123*	*$131*	*$139*
100% FPG GMI	$1,069	$1,341	$1,613	$1,884	$2,156	$2,428	$2,699	$2,971	$3,243	$3,514	$3,786	$4,058	$4,329	$4,601	$4,873
4% Co-pay	*$43*	*$54*	*$65*	*$75*	*$86*	*$97*	*$108*	*$119*	*$130*	*$141*	*$151*	*$162*	*$173*	*$184*	*$195*
105% FPG GMI	$1,123	$1,408	$1,693	$1,978	$2,264	$2,549	$2,834	$3,119	$3,405	$3,690	$3,975	$4,260	$4,546	$4,831	$5,116
5% Co-pay	*$56*	*$70*	*$85*	*$99*	*$113*	*$127*	*$142*	*$156*	*$170*	*$185*	*$199*	*$213*	*$227*	*$242*	*$256*
110% FPG GMI	$1,176	$1,475	$1,774	$2,073	$2,371	$2,670	$2,969	$3,268	$3,567	$3,866	$4,164	$4,463	$4,762	$5,061	$5,360
6% Co-pay	*$71*	*$89*	*$106*	*$124*	*$142*	*$160*	*$178*	*$196*	*$214*	*$232*	*$250*	*$268*	*$286*	*$304*	*$322*
115% FPG GMI	$1,230	$1,542	$1,854	$2,167	$2,479	$2,792	$3,104	$3,416	$3,729	$4,041	$4,354	$4,666	$4,979	$5,291	$5,603
7% Co-pay	*$86*	*$108*	*$130*	*$152*	*$174*	*$195*	*$217*	*$239*	*$261*	*$283*	*$305*	*$327*	*$349*	*$370*	*$392*
120% FPG GMI	$1,283	$1,609	$1,935	$2,261	$2,587	$2,913	$3,239	$3,565	$3,891	$4,217	$4,543	$4,869	$5,195	$5,521	$5,847
8% Co-pay	*$103*	*$129*	*$155*	*$181*	*$207*	*$233*	*$259*	*$285*	*$311*	*$337*	*$363*	*$390*	*$416*	*$442*	*$468*
125% FPG GMI	$1,336	$1,676	$2,016	$2,355	$2,695	$3,034	$3,374	$3,714	$4,053	$4,393	$4,732	$5,072	$5,411	$5,751	$6,091
9% Co-pay	*$120*	*$151*	*$181*	*$212*	*$243*	*$273*	*$304*	*$334*	*$365*	*$395*	*$426*	*$456*	*$487*	*$518*	*$548*
130% FPG GMI	$1,390	$1,743	$2,096	$2,449	$2,803	$3,156	$3,509	$3,862	$4,215	$4,568	$4,922	$5,275	$5,628	$5,981	$6,334
10% Co-pay	*$139*	*$174*	*$210*	*$245*	*$280*	*$316*	*$351*	*$386*	*$422*	*$457*	*$492*	*$528*	*$563*	*$598*	*$633*
135% FPG GMI	$1,443	$1,810	$2,177	$2,544	$2,910	$3,277	$3,644	$4,011	$4,377	$4,744	$5,111	$5,478	$5,844	$6,211	$6,578
11% Co-pay	*$159*	*$199*	*$239*	*$280*	*$320*	*$360*	*$401*	*$441*	*$481*	*$522*	*$562*	*$603*	*$643*	*$683*	*$724*
140% FPG GMI	$1,497	$1,877	$2,258	$2,638	$3,018	$3,399	$3,779	$4,159	$4,540	$4,920	$5,300	$5,681	$6,061	$6,441	$6,822
12% Co-pay	*$180*	*$225*	*$271*	*$317*	*$362*	*$408*	*$453*	*$499*	*$545*	*$590*	*$636*	*$682*	*$727*	*$773*	*$819*
145% FPG GMI	$1,550	$1,944	$2,338	$2,732	$3,126	$3,520	$3,914	$4,308	$4,702	$5,096	$5,489	$5,883	$6,277	$6,671	$7,065
13% Co-pay	*$202*	*$253*	*$304*	*$355*	*$406*	*$458*	*$509*	*$560*	*$611*	*$662*	*$714*	*$765*	*$816*	*$867*	*$918*
150% FPG GMI	$1,604	$2,011	$2,419	$2,826	$3,234	$3,641	$4,049	$4,456	$4,864	$5,271	$5,679	$6,086	$6,494	$6,901	$7,309
14% Co-pay	*$225*	*$282*	*$339*	*$396*	*$453*	*$510*	*$567*	*$624*	*$681*	*$738*	*$795*	*$852*	*$909*	*$966*	*$1,023*

Total Monthly Co-payment = Gross Monthly Income (GMI) x the percentage assigned to the income range, which is based on Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) or $10, whichever is greater.

The co-payments listed are minimums and correspond to the lowest level for each income range.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Child Care Sliding Fee Scale** **Effective August 1, 2006**

Supersedes: **Child Care 1-5 (5/01/05)**

References: **52-2-713 and 53-4-611 MCA**
Section 37.80.202 ARM
45 CFR Part 98.42

General Rule

For fiscal purposes of the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship programs, the ECSB uses the State of Montana fiscal year calendar, which is July 1 through June 30 of the following year.

Sliding Fee Scale

The Child Care Sliding Fee Scale is a guide to determine the family' s monthly co-payment obligation to the child care provider. A family, whose income falls below approximately 95.5% of the federal poverty level, pays a $10.00 monthly co-payment. Higher co-payments are a product of the family' s Non-TANF gross monthly income (GMI) multiplied by the respective co-payment factor:

Monthly Co-payment = GMI x Percentage assigned to the Income Range.

The column headings at the top indicate family size. The row headings on the left indicate 1) the family' s gross monthly income (GMI) level, as a percentage of the federal poverty guidelines and, 2) the co-payment percentage, for each income range.

Co-payment is Required

Parents must pay their monthly co-payment to their child care provider to remain eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. See Co-payment Requirements in Section 6-4.

The Montana Child Care Sliding Fee Scale is located on the back of this page. The new sliding fee scale should add in the 1% and 2% bands for Non-TANF.

Montana Child Care Sliding Fee Scale - Effective Aug 1, 2006

The monthly co-payment is a percentage of the family's gross monthly income (GMI).

FAMILY SIZE >	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Base Co-pay	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10
TANF GMI + $1	$704	$885	$1,067	$1,250	$1,431	$1,612	$1,794	$1,975	$2,156	$2,338	$2,519	$2,700	$2,881	$3,063	$3,246
1% Co-pay	*$10*	*$10*	*$11*	*$13*	*$14*	*$16*	*$18*	*$20*	*$22*	*$23*	*$25*	*$27*	*$29*	*$31*	*$32*
90% FPG GMI	$990	$1,245	$1,500	$1,755	$2,010	$2,265	$2,520	$2,775	$3,030	$3,285	$3,540	$3,795	$4,050	$4,305	$4,560
2% Co-pay	*$20*	*$25*	*$30*	*$35*	*$40*	*$45*	*$50*	*$56*	*$61*	*$66*	*$71*	*$76*	*$81*	*$86*	*$91*
95% FPG GMI	$1,045	$1,314	$1,583	$1,853	$2,122	$2,391	$2,660	$2,929	$3,198	$3,468	$3,737	$4,006	$4,275	$4,544	$4,813
3% Co-pay	*$31*	*$39*	*$47*	*$56*	*$64*	*$72*	*$80*	*$88*	*$96*	*$104*	*$112*	*$120*	*$128*	*$136*	*$144*
100% FPG GMI	$1,100	$1,383	$1,667	$1,950	$2,233	$2,517	$2,800	$3,083	$3,367	$3,650	$3,933	$4,217	$4,500	$4,783	$5,067
4% Co-pay	*$44*	*$55*	*$67*	*$78*	*$89*	*$101*	*$112*	*$123*	*$135*	*$146*	*$157*	*$169*	*$180*	*$191*	*$203*
105% FPG GMI	$1,155	$1,453	$1,750	$2,048	$2,345	$2,643	$2,940	$3,238	$3,535	$3,833	$4,130	$4,428	$4,725	$5,023	$5,320
5% Co-pay	*$58*	*$73*	*$88*	*$102*	*$117*	*$132*	*$147*	*$162*	*$177*	*$192*	*$207*	*$221*	*$236*	*$251*	*$266*
110% FPG GMI	$1,210	$1,522	$1,833	$2,145	$2,457	$2,768	$3,080	$3,392	$3,703	$4,015	$4,327	$4,638	$4,950	$5,262	$5,573
6% Co-pay	*$73*	*$91*	*$110*	*$129*	*$147*	*$166*	*$185*	*$204*	*$222*	*$241*	*$260*	*$278*	*$297*	*$316*	*$334*
115% FPG GMI	$1,265	$1,591	$1,917	$2,243	$2,568	$2,894	$3,220	$3,546	$3,872	$4,198	$4,523	$4,849	$5,175	$5,501	$5,827
7% Co-pay	*$89*	*$111*	*$134*	*$157*	*$180*	*$203*	*$225*	*$248*	*$271*	*$294*	*$317*	*$339*	*$362*	*$385*	*$408*
120% FPG GMI	$1,320	$1,660	$2,000	$2,340	$2,680	$3,020	$3,360	$3,700	$4,040	$4,380	$4,720	$5,060	$5,400	$5,740	$6,080
8% Co-pay	*$106*	*$133*	*$160*	*$187*	*$214*	*$242*	*$269*	*$296*	*$323*	*$350*	*$378*	*$405*	*$432*	*$459*	*$486*
125% FPG GMI	$1,375	$1,729	$2,083	$2,438	$2,792	$3,146	$3,500	$3,854	$4,208	$4,563	$4,917	$5,271	$5,625	$5,979	$6,333
9% Co-pay	*$124*	*$156*	*$187*	*$219*	*$251*	*$283*	*$315*	*$347*	*$379*	*$411*	*$443*	*$474*	*$506*	*$538*	*$570*
130% FPG GMI	$1,430	$1,798	$2,167	$2,535	$2,903	$3,272	$3,640	$4,008	$4,377	$4,745	$5,113	$5,482	$5,850	$6,218	$6,587
10% Co-pay	*$143*	*$180*	*$217*	*$254*	*$290*	*$327*	*$364*	*$401*	*$438*	*$475*	*$511*	*$548*	*$585*	*$622*	*$659*
135% FPG GMI	$1,485	$1,868	$2,250	$2,633	$3,015	$3,398	$3,780	$4,163	$4,545	$4,928	$5,310	$5,693	$6,075	$6,458	$6,840
11% Co-pay	*$163*	*$205*	*$248*	*$290*	*$332*	*$374*	*$416*	*$458*	*$500*	*$542*	*$584*	*$626*	*$668*	*$710*	*$752*
140% FPG GMI	$1,540	$1,937	$2,333	$2,730	$3,127	$3,523	$3,920	$4,317	$4,713	$5,110	$5,507	$5,903	$6,300	$6,697	$7,093
12% Co-pay	*$185*	*$232*	*$280*	*$328*	*$375*	*$423*	*$470*	*$518*	*$566*	*$613*	*$661*	*$708*	*$756*	*$804*	*$851*
145% FPG GMI	$1,595	$2,006	$2,417	$2,828	$3,238	$3,649	$4,060	$4,471	$4,882	$5,293	$5,703	$6,114	$6,525	$6,936	$7,347
13% Co-pay	*$207*	*$261*	*$314*	*$368*	*$421*	*$474*	*$528*	*$581*	*$635*	*$688*	*$741*	*$795*	*$848*	*$902*	*$955*
150% FPG GMI	$1,650	$2,075	$2,500	$2,925	$3,350	$3,775	$4,200	$4,625	$5,050	$5,475	$5,900	$6,325	$6,750	$7,175	$7,600
14% Co-pay	*$231*	*$291*	*$350*	*$410*	*$469*	*$529*	*$588*	*$648*	*$707*	*$767*	*$826*	*$886*	*$945*	*$1,005*	*$1,064*

Total Monthly Co-payment = Gross Monthly Income (GMI) x the percentage assigned to the income range, which is based on Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) or $10, whichever is greater.

The co-payments listed are minimums and correspond to the lowest level for each income range.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Child Eligibility - Overview**

Supersedes: **Child Care 1-8 (7/01/03)**

References: **Sections 52-2-701-704, 52-2-711-713, 53-4-610 MCA; Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM 45 CFR Part 98**

General Rule

The child, the parents, and the child care provider must qualify to participate in the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program. Child eligibility requirements are detailed in this section.

US Citizenship

Montana administers the Child Care and Development Fund through private non-profit Child Care Resource and Referral agencies. There is no requirement for such agencies to determine or verify US citizenship for children receiving Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships.

Montana Residency – Child (& Parent)

To receive Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships, the parent and the child must be living together in Montana.

CPS Exception: Montana foster care children who reside outside of Montana and need child care, may use Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships.

Residency is established when the child and parent are living in Montana voluntarily with the intention of making a home here and not for a temporary purpose. A child is a resident of the state in which the parent, or person acting in loco parentis, is a resident. Residence does not depend on the reason for which the parent entered the state. The parent's written declaration of intent to reside permanently or seek employment in the state of Montana verifies the residency requirement. There is no durational requirement, such as having to reside in Montana for six months prior to obtaining a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

NOTE: Parents in the military, even though they may claim residency in another state, are considered to meet the residency requirements for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship purposes, since they are

employed and are here for more than a temporary purpose.

Child Must Live with Parent

The child must live with the parent, or the individual serving in loco parentis, applying for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship on behalf of the child.

Child's Age

A child is eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, under Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), when the child meets any one of the following age categories:

- A child is eligible from birth through age 12.
- A child, who has special needs, is eligible through age 18.
  - The special needs must be verified by appropriate documentation from a physician, psychologist or licensed social worker.
- A child, who has special needs and is attending school (high school or equivalency program), is eligible through age 18.
  - The special needs must be verified by appropriate documentation from a physician, psychologist or licensed social worker.
- A child, who is under supervision of a court, is eligible through age 17.

Child's Relationship to Care Provider

Not every care arrangement qualifies for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. A child is NOT eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship if the child is related to the child's care provider in any of the following ways:

- The child's care provider is the child's parent.
- The child's care facility is owned, entirely or in part, by the parent.
- The child's care provider is a member of the child's TANF Cash assistance unit.
- The child's care provider is a member of the child's Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship eligibility unit.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Parent Eligibility - Overview**

Supersedes: **Child Care 1-9 (7/01/03)**

References: **Sections 52-2-701-704, 52-2-711-713, 53-4-610 MCA;**
Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM
45 CFR Part 98

General Rule

The child, the parents, and the child care provider must qualify to participate in the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program. Eligible parents must:

- Earn less than 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for their family size;
- Need child care in order to work or work and attend school or participate in FIA/EP activities;
- Cooperate with child support enforcement or have in place a court approved parenting plan, if an absent parent exists.

The need for child care must meet minimum work and participation requirements based on family size, composition, and circumstance.

US Citizenship

US Citizenship is not required by the parent.

Montana Residency

Refer to Child Eligibility in Section 1-6 for Montana residency requirements for the child and the parent, who must be living together in Montana.

Parent – Overview of Eligibility Categories

The Montana Department of Public Services (DPHHS) Early Childhood Services Bureau provides Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships for parents participating in the following programs:

1. Families who work and have a low income, but earn less than 150% of the federal poverty guidelines (Non-TANF).
2. Families who receive TANF Cash Assistance and are participating in

Family Investment Agreement/Employability Plan Activities requiring child care.

3. Eligible tribal families, if they are not being served by their Tribal CCDF program.
4. Families participating in a Tribal TANF program, if their Tribal CCDF program is not serving them.
5. CPS families in need of child care because the children are in danger of abuse or neglect.

Non-TANF Parent Overview– ***See Section 2 for Details***

Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships for low-income families whose income falls below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines:

- Low-income working families must meet one of the following minimum hourly work requirements each month:
  - 120 hours per month for two-parent families; or
  - 60 hours per month single parent families; or
  - 40 hours per month for single parent families, while the parent attends education/training full time.

  Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are provided for employment time and out-of-home classroom time, when attending school or training.

  Note: Disabled parents who are not able to care for their children are not included when determining the minimum hourly work requirement for the family.

- Disabled parents who work, but are not able to meet the minimum hourly work requirement each month, may be eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship only during employment time.
- Low-income teen parents (through age 19) attending high school, GED or an equivalency program do not have a minimum work requirement.
  - A child care scholarship is provided for out-of-home classroom time and employment hours.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Parent Eligibility - Overview**

TANF Cash Assistance Parents Overview – *See Section 3-1 for Details*

The local County Offices of Public Assistance determine eligibility for families seeking Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):

- Parent receiving TANF Cash assistance may receive a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship for employment and Family Investment Agreement (FIA)/Employability Plan (EP) activities, which require child care. Parents negotiate FIA/EP activities with their OPA or WoRC Case Manager. Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are determined according to the family's need for child care while participating in the Family Investment Agreement/Employability Plan.

Tribal TANF Parents *See Section 3-2 for Details*

Montana's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan supports all TANF parents in the State. Both Tribal and Montana TANF families are guaranteed child care in support of Family Investment Activities (FIA)/Employability Plan (EP) activities. Currently, the Confederated Salish & Kootenai tribes of the Flathead Nation, the Fort Belknap Indian Community, and the Rocky Boy Indian Community are operating their own Tribal TANF program in Montana. Tribal TANF families who:

- find they are not eligible for Tribal CCDF benefits, or
- find their Tribal CCDF has been used, may apply for Montana CCDF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships through their district Child Care Resource and Referral agency.

A parent must provide written verification their Tribal CCDF is not able to serve their family, before a State CCDF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship will be approved.

CPS Child Care Eligibility Overview - *See Section 4 for Details*

DPHHS Child and Family Services Division (CFSD) social workers identify families in need of child care for protective services. Social workers evaluate the risk of child abuse and neglect in determining a family's eligibility for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships:

- A CFSD Social Worker determines eligibility.
- The child care provider may be selected by the Social Worker.
- There is no income eligibility requirement for families.

- There is no co-payment obligation for parents.

The Non-TANF CPS child care budget is limited. If a family is temporarily eligible for TANF benefits or eligible for Non-TANF child care, CPS child care needs may be served under either one of these Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship options.

Food Stamps Employment & Training

For parents participating in the Food Stamp Employment & Training (FSET) job-seeking activities are not covered under the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program. The parent's FSET Case Manager may be able to help parents with child care expenses.

Food Stamp Employment & Training requires:

- Parent is receiving Food Stamps,
- Parent cannot be receiving TANF, and
- Parent must reside in Lewis & Clark, Missoula, Silverbow or Yellowstone county.

Other Child Care Options

Parents may contact their local Child Care Resource and Referral agency to explore other child care subsidy options within their community (i.e. Employer sponsored flex spending, local community funds, supportive services).

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Child Care Provider Eligibility - Overview**

Supersedes: **1-10 (7/01/03)**

References: **Sections 52-2-701-704, 52-2-711-713, 53-4-610 MCA; Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM**
45 CFR Part 98

General Rule

The child, the parents, and the child care provider must qualify to participate in the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program. Child care providers must be licensed, registered or approved for a state payment purposes as a legally unregistered provider (LUP) or a legally unregistered in-home provider (LUI).

Parental Access to Child in Care

The provider must allow unlimited parental access to the parent's children and to the child care facility during normal hours of the facility's operation, whenever the children are in the provider's care.

No Discrimination

The child care provider may not discriminate against children based on race, national origin, ethnic background, sex, religion, or handicap.

Child's Relationship to Care Provider

Not every care arrangement qualifies for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. A child is NOT eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship if the child is related to the child's care provider in any of the following ways:

- The child's care provider is the child's parent.
- The child's care facility is owned, entirely or in part, by the parent.
- The child's care provider is a member of the child's TANF Cash assistance unit.
- The child's care provider is a member of the child's Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship eligibility unit.

Parents may choose an approved LUI who is referred to as an At-Home Relative Caregiver. This is child care that is provided by a person living with the child who is a relative of the child in one of the following ways:

- Aunt or Uncle;
- Grandparent; or
- Great-grandparent

The relationship of a qualifying provider who lives with the child must be verified through birth certificates and marriage certificates.

Providers Shall Maintain Their License, Registration or Payment Number

Parents may choose care provided in the following settings:

- Licensed Child Care Center *(details in QAD licensing addendum)*
- Registered Family or Group Home *(details in QAD licensing addendum)*
- Legally Unregistered Provider – LUP applicants must pass background checks before they are eligible *(see Legally Unregistered Providers)*
- Out-of-State Facilities who have obtained a "For-Payment-Purposes-Only" number from the QAD Child Care Licensing Program

  EXAMPLE: A parent and child are residents of Montana. The parent selects an out-of-state child care provider for their child, where the parent works.

  EXAMPLE: A Montana foster child living out-of-state may use CPS child care.

All child care providers, and their employees and substitute caregivers, must pass background checks to provide care under the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program.

Providers Licensed by Another Entity

Out-of-jurisdiction providers must complete Montana's child care licensing paperwork and send a copy of their licensing/registration credentials. Once the Child Care Licensing Program determines that the licensing/registration criteria meet or exceed Montana standards, a "for-payment-purposes-only"

number may be issued. Out-of-jurisdiction providers seeking approval to serve Montana families under a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship shall contact the DPHHS QAD Child Care Licensing Program:

DPHHS QAD Child Care Licensing Program
Becky Fleming-Siebenaler
PO Box 202953
Helena, MT 59620-2953
Office: (406) 444-7770
FAX: (406) 444-1742
bfleming@mt.gov

Montana currently recognizes select providers in the following political boundaries:

- Child care providers located on an Indian reservation. Currently, most tribes invite the State of Montana to license/register their child care providers with the exception of Crow and the Northern Cheyenne reservations.
- Malmstrom Air Force Base, near Great Falls
- Wyoming (Group Day Care)

Providers Shall Maintain Sign-in/Sign-out Sheets

All child care providers (including LUPs/LUIs) shall maintain current sign-in/sign-out records for each child receiving child care assistance and utilize them as follows:

- Each time the child enters or leaves the provider's care, the parent or other individual authorized to deliver or pick up the child shall initial or sign the sign-in/sign-out sheet. An electronic signature system may be used if it employs a unique and confidential identification process for individuals.
- Sign-in/sign-out records must indicate the child's name, the date, the hour, and the minute when the child enters and leaves the provider's care.
- The provider shall make sign-in/sign-out records available to child care resource and referral agency staff and state and local government health, safety, or law enforcement representatives upon request.

- The provider shall keep sign-in/sign-out records for five years beyond the date of attendance.

Providers Shall Allow Access to Facility and Records

A child care provider shall allow access to their child care setting and child records during business hours to the following personnel:

- employees or other agents of state or local government;
- CCR&R personnel investigating child care services; and
- Health, building or fire officials investigating child care facility health and safety issues.

Providers must keep sign-in/sign-out records for five years.

Providers Shall Bill for Actual Attendance within Limits of the Child Care Certification Plan

The provider's claim must be for actual care provided by the provider designated on the child care certification plan and subject to the limitations of continuity-of-care policies outlined in section 6-6 of this manual. The provider may not bill for care subcontracted to another individual or facility.

- The claim must indicate the child's actual attendance, within one quarter hour as it relates to approved activities. The provider's claim may be rounded to the nearest quarter hour of total daily attendance.
- The claim must be verifiable through the provider's sign-in/sign-out records as noted above.

Providers Shall Submit Invoices Within 60 Days

Child care providers have 60 days to submit claims for services:

- Providers must submit invoices to their district CCR&R, or submit the invoice on the CCUBS Provider Internet Invoicing web page, within 60 days of the service month to be eligible for payment.
- If the child care certification plan is not available during the service month, the invoice, is due at the district CCR&R within 60 days following the provider's receipt of the invoice.
- If corrections or adjustments to a submitted invoice are necessary, they must be received by the CCR&R within the 60-day period prescribed.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview - Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Child Care Provider Eligibility - Overview**

Providers Losing Their Status Shall Notify Parents

Child care providers shall maintain their License, Registration, or Legally Unregistered Provider (LUP) status. If they lose their provider status for any reason, they shall immediately notify the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship families with children in their care. A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is not paid to a provider who is not licensed, registered, or legally operating in the State of Montana. The provider may not bill the household for payments denied by the department due to the provider's failure to comply with licensing, certification or registration requirements.

Provider Rights and Responsibilities

Child care providers serving Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship families shall annually review and sign a "Provider Rights & Responsibilities" form. CCR&Rs shall file a signed copy for each provider serving a scholarship family. If a new provider has not already signed a "Provider Rights & Responsibilities" form, the CCR&R shall obtain a signed copy at the New Provider Orientation.

When policies change, the ECSB will mail new "Provider Rights & Responsibilities" forms statewide. Meanwhile, CCR&Rs shall distribute the "Provider Rights & Responsibilities" to new providers as they become licensed, registered, or approved for payment under LUP status and should develop a system to distribute and collect "Provider Rights & Responsibilities" from existing providers on an annual basis.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Confidentiality**

Supersedes: **Child Care 1-7 (5/01/05)**

References: **37-80-103 ARM**
MCA 41-3-201, 41-3-205
Montana Constitution, Art II, Sections 9 & 10

General Rule

The Department of Public Health & Human Services (DPHHS) and its contractors may share client information for purposes directly connected with the administration of the public assistance programs with other federal programs and certain entitled entities. Confidential information concerning the applicant or participant, without notice to or permission of the individual, may be provided and used for the following purposes:

- Reporting child abuse and neglect to the appropriate authority (MCA 41-3-205);
- Conducting child support activities;
- Conducting child care licensing activities;
- Establishing eligibility and administering (including audits, investigations, prosecutions, etc.) federal programs or federally assisted programs, which provide assistance (cash, in-kind, or services) directly to individuals based on need.

Requests for information about current or past participants, which do not meet the above criteria must be submitted in writing to the ECSB:

Early Childhood Services Bureau
PO Box 202925
Helena, MT 59620-2925
444-2547 FAX

When there is a question about a breach of confidentiality, the Early Childhood Services Bureau will refer the request to the Office of Legal Affairs.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Confidentiality**

HIPAA

Federal Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Policy regulations were implemented by the Department and its contractors in April 2003. Child Care Resource and Referral agencies received training in HIPAA regulations and practices. CCR&Rs received HIPAA policy materials developed by the Department and the Early Childhood Services Bureau at that time.

As contractors CCR&Rs are subject to HIPAA confidentiality policies. This includes training current and new CCR&R personnel in HIPAA regulations and practices.

Subpoenas

When a subpoena is served, the ECSB will refer the request to the Office of Legal Affairs. Send or FAX the subpoena to the Early Childhood Services Bureau.

Emergency Situations

When information is needed to provide emergency medical care, the information must be released. As soon as possible thereafter, the applicant or participant must be notified of the release of information.

Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect, A Statutory Requirement

MCA 41-3-201 [portions relevant to child care services]: When the professionals and officials listed in sub section 2 [below] know or have reasonable cause to suspect, as a result of information they receive in their professional or official capacity, that a child is abused or neglected, they shall report the matter promptly to the Department of Public Health and Human Services or its local affiliate [see "Where to Report . . ." below].

(2) Professional and officials required to report are:

(d) school teachers, other school officials and employees who work with children during regular school hours;

(e) a social worker, operator or employee of any registered or licensed day-care or substitute care facility, staff of a resource and referral grant program organized under 52-2-711 [the CCR&R network] or of a child and adult food care program, or

an operator or employee of a child care facility;
(j) an employee or owner of an entity that contracts with the department to provide direct services to children. [i.e. Legally Unregistered Provider]

(3) Any person may make a report under this section if the person knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or neglected.

(4) (a) Except as provided in subsection (4)(b) or (4)(c), a person listed in subsection (2) may not refuse to make a report as required in this section on the grounds of a physician-patient or similar privilege.

(5) The reports referred to under this section must contain:

(a) the names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child's care;

(b) to the extent known, the child's age and the nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous injuries;

(c) the facts that led the person reporting to believe that the child has suffered injury or injuries or willful neglect, within the meaning of this chapter.

MCA 41-3-203: Immunity from liability. (1) Anyone investigating or reporting any incident of child abuse or neglect under 41-3-201 or 41-3-202, participating in resulting in judicial proceedings, or furnishing hospital or medical records as required by 41-3-202 is immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed unless the person was grossly negligent or acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose or provided information knowing the information to be false.

Where to Report Child Abuse & Neglect

Child abuse and neglect may be reported in Montana by dialing the following toll free telephone number:

1-866-820-KIDS (5437)
If the child is in immediate danger,
call 911 or the local law enforcement agency.

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Confidentiality

Agency Personnel

Only qualified program employees who are restricted from disclosing confidential information shall conduct the required interviews.

NOTE: Non-program employees may conduct interviews or certify applicants when specifically allowed under federal regulation (e.g., federally declared disaster).

Contractors

Violation of Department policy confidentiality by a contractor may result in cancellation of that contract with the Department.

Through the contracting process, contractors agree to protect the confidentiality of any material and information concerning a participant provided under the auspices of the contract and are subject to the same confidentiality requirements as Department employees.

All materials and information, whether verbal, written, or otherwise provided to the contractor by the State or acquired by the contractor on behalf of the State will be regarded as confidential information.

Reasons for policy:
This policy is established to provide general information requirements regarding the safeguarding of participant information in all matters relating to the Department. The Department or its agents generally provides information which individuals request about themselves. This policy describes how individuals gain access to their own records as well as the procedures that the Department or its agents use to decide whether to release information about program participants upon request. Information that cannot be associated with an individual's identity is generally available for release to the public.

Volunteers

Volunteers or others who are not employed by DPHHS or its contractors may not determine eligibility. However, they may assist in related activities such as:

- Obtaining necessary information; and
- Helping applicants complete the application form.

Volunteers are restricted from disclosing confidential information.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Confidentiality**

CCR&R Practices

Child Care Resource and Referral agencies have the responsibility of maintaining confidentiality of family and provider information. Examples of maintaining confidentiality in the CCR&R setting include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The name or any identifying information is not available in a public location, of a family receiving service.
- The CCR&R maintains confidentiality when a non-custodial parent requests the location of their children, without approval from authorities.
- An applicant's or a participant's personal information remains confidential when a child care provider inquires about eligibility.
- The CCR&R maintains confidentiality when a provider seeks the location of a previous customer.

Release to Child Care Licensors & Child and Family Services Investigators

Child Care Resource and Referral agency staff and child care providers shall release information relevant to authorities participating in child care licensing or child protective services investigations.

Release to Law Enforcement

Only the participant's address can be released to a federal, state or local law enforcement officer who presents a written request for information which includes the participant's name and specifies that the individual:

- is fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody or confinement for a felony, or;
- is violating a condition of parole or probation; or
- has information necessary for the officer to conduct official duties.

Release to Participant

The applicant/participant may review all information, which was considered when making the eligibility determination in the case file. Privileged information, such as the name of individuals who have disclosed information about the household without the household's knowledge or the nature or status of pending criminal prosecution, may be withheld. The agency must also make

available, without charge, the specific materials necessary for a household or its representative to determine whether a fair hearing should be requested or to prepare for a hearing.

Release to Others

Case file information may be released in situations other than those already described only if the head of the household, the spouse or other person authorized by the household provides a written authorization to release information which includes:

- the date the authorization expires, and;
- the name of the person or agency to whom the information will be released, and;
- information which can be released:
  - itemizing specific items;
  - items dated within a certain time frame; or
  - general release.
- and, a dated signature of the authorizing individual.

Authorization to Release Information DPHHS-HCS-101

The Authorization to Release Information page of the child care application is used to assist the applicant/participant in obtaining information necessary to determine eligibility. It explains the client's rights to confidentiality and gives the participant/applicant the option of authorizing the release of information or declining to authorize the release of information.

> EXAMPLE: An applicant has been working and is unable to provide verification of current income. The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist should use the signed Authorization to Release Information (DPHHS-HCS-101) form to contact the employer and obtain verification of income to assist the applicant.

The authorization expires one year from the date of signature, so must be completed at application and yearly thereafter. The participant/applicant always has the right to rescind the authorization in writing. Because one cannot waive another individual's right to confidentiality, each adult household

member should be given the opportunity to review and sign the Authorization to Release Information page of the application.

Refusal to Authorize Release on HCS/CC-101

Signing the Authorization to Release Information page of the application is not a condition of eligibility. However, if the participant/applicant does not wish to sign the form it should be case noted that they were given the opportunity, refused, and intend to provide eligibility related information without assistance.

Although a participant may not authorize a release of information, the CCR&R may contact the caseworker, who determines eligibility, when serving the family's child care needs in support of TANF, CPS or Full Day/Full Year Head Start programs. The information shall be limited to a need-to-know basis regarding the child care schedule required for the family. Refer back to the general rule for this, as outlined in Section 1-7.

EXAMPLE: A TANF participant may be self-conscious about FIA/EP activities involving a drug rehabilitation program. CCR&R staff only need to know the hours of child care required by the family in order to set up a child care certification plan.

One Time Only Authorization to Release Information DPHHS-HCS-102

The One Time Only Authorization to Release Information (DPHHS-HCS-102) form is used for incident specific releases of information on a case-by-case basis. The participant/applicant should be very specific about what information they are authorizing for release. Not every participant/applicant would need to sign the form. The participant/applicant sets the amount of time for which the authorization is in effect and can rescind the authorization at any time in writing.

EXAMPLE: A CCR&R Eligibility Specialist may need to verify the extent of an individual's disability to determine the appropriate work requirement for the family. The participant could complete the One Time Only Authorization to Release Information (DPHHS-HCS-102) form and state the effective period.

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Confidentiality

Child Care Providers

Child Care Providers shall keep all information pertaining to the family confidential, except for the following circumstances:

- All child care providers are mandatory reporters for suspected child abuse or neglect. These concerns shall be reported to the Department's Child Protective Services Intake Unit.
- Child care providers shall share information with Department child care licensing personnel.
- The provider shall share attendance information with the Department or the CCR&R, with regard to the child care scholarship program.
- A provider may provide documentation indicating service to subsidized families to qualify for related ECSB programs:
  - Child and Adult Care Food Program
  - Best Beginnings Provider Grant Programs
  - Child Care Licensing/Registration Programs

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Timely Notices and Termination**

References: **Sections 45-6-301(4), 52-2-713, and 52-2-726, 53-4-611, MCA; Sections 11.2.201 – 220, 37.5.103, 37.5.307 ARM; 45 CFR 98.50 and .66**

General Rule

Parents and providers who are subject to an adverse action taken by the Department or by the CCR&R, as defined in Section 1-3 of this manual, are entitled to timely notice. Timely notice means that the CCR&R has mailed written notification to the parent or provider ten days prior to the adverse action.

Termination for Parents

Reasons for termination, reduction, or denial of Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The CCR&R agency does not recertify the household or the certification plan expires.
- A parent terminates the employment or training that made the parent eligible for child care assistance.
- The parent no longer needs child care to allow the parent to participate in an approved work or training activity.
- The parent voluntarily makes a written request to the child care resource and referral worker that the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship be closed.
- The child is over the age limit.
- A parent who was participating in a TANF or WoRC Program is no longer a participant in that program and is not otherwise eligible for a Best Beginnings child care scholarship.
- The child no longer receives care at the child care facility specified in the certification plan and there is no indication that the child will be receiving care at the facility in the near future.
- The CPS case plan or treatment plan no longer requires child care be provided.
- DPHHS or Child Care and Development Fund institute budget restrictions.

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships

Subject:
Timely Notices and Termination

Termination for Providers

Reasons for termination, reduction or denial of Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships include, but are not limited to the following:

- The child care provider no longer meets respective licensing, registration, or legally unregistered provider qualifications; or
- The child care provider has received three strikes in accordance to the over claim policy, as outlined in Section 6-9.

Providers Shall Allow Access to Facility and Records

A provider's eligibility to receive state payment under a state assisted child care program may be terminated if:

- the provider willfully misrepresents services provided, with respect to sign-in/sign-out records or attendance billed on invoices; or
- the provider refuses access to the child care setting and child records during business hours to the following personnel:
  - employees or other agents of state or local government, investigating child care services or child abuse or neglect;
  - child care resource and referral agency personnel investigating child care services; or
  - health, building, or fire officials investigating child care facility health and safety issues.

Notice when State/CCR&R Reduce Benefits (Timely Notice)

If the State or Child Care Resource and Referral agency terminates or reduces the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship before the end of the certification plan, the parent and the provider must be mailed written notification of termination/reduction of the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, at least ten (10) days before the termination date. The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may continue for the notice period.

The following situations require that a 10-day notice be provided:

- A parent terminates the employment or training that made the parent eligible for child care assistance;
- The parent no longer needs child care to allow the parent to

participate in an approved work or training activity;

- A parent who was participating in a TANF or WoRC Program is no longer a participant in that program and is not otherwise eligible for a Best Beginnings child care scholarship;
- The child is over the age limit;
- The parent failed to make the required co-payment; or
- DPHHS or Child Care and Development Fund institute budget restrictions.

EXAMPLE: A parent calls their local CCR&R and talks to their eligibility worker. The parent has stated that they have not been working for the last 8 days, but have been looking for work. The parent has decided that there is no longer a need for child care because they will be staying home with the children for a while.

The applicant's verbal statement indicates the family has lost eligibility for the program.

⇒ Send a closure notice to the parent and to the provider.
⇒ Close and case note the information in CCUBS.
⇒ Pay the 10-day notice period as regular attendance days by following the certification plan.

No Advance Notice for the Parent/Provider (Adequate Notice)

The certification plan end-date serves as written notice of termination of the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. If a parent fails to re-certify, no additional notice must be given to either the parent or the provider.

No advance notice of termination of a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship to a parent or provider is required in the following instances:

- The CCR&R agency does not recertify the household or ***the certification plan expires;***
- The parent voluntarily makes a written request to the child care

resource and referral worker that the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship be closed;

- The child care provider no longer meets respective licensing, registration, or legally unregistered provider qualifications;
- The child no longer receives care at the child care facility specified in the certification plan and there is no indication that the child will be receiving care at the facility in the near future.

Generally, the parent is responsible for informing the provider of any changes in their child care requirements. However, the provider is responsible for notifying the CCR&R agency if a child is absent five (5) consecutive days without explanation and/or the family's whereabouts are unknown.

The CCR&R shall mail a closure notice to the parent and child care provider 10 days prior to closing the case. (See Section 6-7 Unexplained Absences for additional information). Scholarship payments will be honored up to the closure date.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Overview – Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Fair Hearing Process**

Supersedes: **Child Care 1-6 (7/01/03)**

References: **Sections 45-6-301(4), 52-2-713, and 52-2-726, 53-4-611, MCA; Sections 11.2.201 – 220, 37.5.103, 37.5.307 ARM; 45 CFR 98.50 and .66**

General Rule

Actions taken by a Child Care Resource and Referral Agency must conform to applicable laws, regulations, and policies. Parents and providers who are subject to any adverse action (as defined in section 1-3 of this manual) by the CCR&R agency are entitled to a fair hearing. However, there is no right to a fair hearing if denial or termination of benefits is based solely on depletion of CCDF funding.

Parents have ninety-days (90) from the mailing date of a notice informing them of an adverse action to request a fair hearing.

Providers have thirty-days (30) from the mailing date of a notice informing them of an adverse action to request a fair hearing.

Request for fair hearing

A request for a fair hearing is any clearly written statement to DPHHS or its agent, by the person denied a benefit stating that they want to present their claim to a higher authority.

The request must be made within the time limits stated below, following the mailing date of the notice of the Department's adverse action:

- 90 days – Parent, whose benefits are reduced or terminated.
- 30 days – Provider, who has been notified of overpayment.
- 10 days – Provider termination or denial (license, registration, or LUP).

Assisting the Claimant

The right to request a fair hearing must not be limited or interfered with in any way. Upon request, DPHHS shall assist the claimant in submitting the request

for a fair hearing. The hearing officer shall provide information necessary for the claimant to prepare for a fair hearing.

If a CCR&R staff member receives a written request for a fair hearing, they should forward it as soon as possible to the following address:

DPHHS – Office of Fair Hearings
P.O. Box 202953
Helena, MT 59620-2953
(406) 444-2470 Office
(406) 444-3980 FAX

Administrative Review

The first step in the fair hearing process is an Administrative Review. When the DPHHS Office of Fair Hearings receives a request for a hearing, the hearings officer notifies the Early Childhood Services Bureau that such a request has been made. The ECSB will schedule a time for an administrative review with the aggrieved party within 20 days of the notification.

The ECSB Child Care Supervisor will conduct a telephone interview with the parent or provider in order to hear their side of the story. The parent or provider may have an attorney present at this time but it is not necessary. The ECSB Supervisor will also review the case in the CCUBS system and interview the CCR&R eligibility worker or supervisor involved in the case.

The ECSB Supervisor will make a determination either in favor of the claimant or the Department/CCR&R agency based upon the circumstances revealed during the administrative review and issue a written report citing applicable rule, policy, and findings. The Administrative Review Report is sent to the parent or provider. It includes form (DPHHS-4) *Administrative Review Report,* that is to be signed and returned to the Office of Fair Hearings indicating that the issue has either been resolved or that they would like to proceed to the fair hearing.

A copy of the Administrative Review narrative is sent to the CCR&R agency. If the administrative review was in favor of the claimant, the narrative will

include instructions to the CCR&R agency regarding the appropriate adjustments and/or payments needed to resolve the issue.

If the ECSB Supervisor determines that the Department/CCR&R agency acted in accordance with the appropriate rules and policies, the claimant may request a more formal fair hearing.

Fair Hearing

If the parent or provider wishes to proceed with a fair hearing or if they do not respond to the administrative review report, the Office of Fair Hearings will set a telephone hearing date and notify the ECSB, the CCR&R agency, and the claimant. Generally, the claimant will be instructed to go to the CCR&R office to participate in the telephone hearing.

Once a hearing date has been set, the ECSB Child Care Supervisor and the CCR&R agency will meet via telephone to review the facts; determine what evidence will be submitted as exhibits into the record; and determine who will testify during the Fair Hearing.

The parent or provider shall have adequate opportunity to examine the contents of his case file (except for those portions that the claimant is precluded from examining by state or federal law) and all documents and records to be used by the department at the hearing at a reasonable time prior to the hearing, as well as during the hearing.

The CCR&R agency is responsible for assembling and mailing a packet containing this information to the claimant, the hearings officer and the ECSB Child Care Supervisor (if needed) before the time scheduled for the hearing.

The ECSB Child Care Supervisor or the Department's Attorney will present the Department/CCR&R's case during the hearing process. The CCR&R caseworker and/or supervisor are to attend the hearing via telephone and provide testimony.

The Fair Hearing is presided over by a "Hearings Officer" who is responsible

for:

- Conducting the hearing;
- Listening to the department's case and entering evidence into the record;
- Listening to the claimant's case and entering evidence into the record; and
- Reviewing the testimony and physical record and issuing findings based on the law, rules, and policies governing the child care program in question.

Adverse Actions

Adverse Actions include:

- a failure of the Department or of the CCR&R agency to provide a parent an opportunity to make an application or reapplication for a child care scholarship;
- a failure of the Department or of the CCR&R agency to act with reasonable promptness on a parent's application for a child care scholarship (reasonable promptness is 30 days from the date of application);
- a failure of the Department or of the CCR&R agency to provide timely or adequate notice when an adverse action will be taken;
- an action by the Department or the CCR&R agency denying, suspending, reducing, or terminating a scholarship of a parent or payment(s) to a provider, or an action by the Department demanding repayment of an overpayment; or
- an action by the CCR&R to deny, suspend, reduce, revoke, or terminate licensure, registration, certification, or enrollment of a provider, or to fail to renew certification, enrollment, licensure, or the registration certificate of a provider who has applied for renewal (pertains to licensed/registered providers and to the LUP provider).

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Non-TANF Child Care Eligibility**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Application Process**

Supersedes: **Child Care 2-1 (5/01/05)**

References: **52-2-701 - 704 & 52-2-711 - 713 MCA; Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM;**
45 CFR Part 98.20 – 47

General Rule

A family may apply for a Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship in person, by mail, or by fax through one of the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies within the state. If the applicant is eligible and there is no waiting list, the eligibility begin-date is established when the CCR&R receives a completed application.

A family participating in the TANF Cash Assistance program may apply for Non-TANF, if the family believes that a Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship will alleviate the need for the TANF Cash benefit.

NOTE: Some local charitable organizations and churches may offer stopgap child care subsidies while families wait for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. This stopgap subsidy does not preclude the family's eligibility for child care scholarship by eliminating the need for care, if the stopgap subsidy is designed to end when a child care scholarship becomes available.

Eligibility Begin-Date

The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship eligibility begin-date is the date the completed application demonstrates eligibility, including the need for child care, due to the parent's activity hours.

EXAMPLE: A family submits an application that shows all household members' demographic data, current income, need for care, and compliance with Child Support. The application date will be the date the application was received at the R&R. Eligibility will be determined when all supporting documentation is received.

EXAMPLE: A family submits an application that shows all household members' demographic data, current income, need for care, and compliance with Child Support. However, the need for child care (employment or school attendance) begins on a future date. When need for child care is documented, the application date will be the date that the family is eligible and has a need for child care. The application may be entered into CCUBS using the date received with the understanding that the application date does not match the date the family demonstrates eligibility.

The application date in CCUBS is an enterable field. Eligibility specialists should enter the later date; either the date the application was received at the CCR&R or the subsequent date the family demonstrated a need for care. The application date cannot be a future date. All applications must be entered into CCUBS.

Gathering Information

Information needed to prospect the family's eligibility is gathered from application materials and by interviewing the parent(s). Use investigative interviewing skills, such as asking if a reported change is expected to continue, and look for a pattern of overtime pay to gather complete information:

- Prospecting Household Composition:
  - Who is related by marriage or parentage?
  - Is a natural or adoptive parent absent?
  - Is child support ordered, through a court or CSED?
  - Are household changes anticipated? If so, when?

- Prospecting Income Eligibility:
  - What type of job?
  - What is the nature of the job (e.g., seasonal, on call, sporadic, contingent on weather conditions, etc.)?
  - What is the rate of pay?
  - How often are the household members paid or receive income?

- How many hours are worked per week.
- Do hours fluctuate?
- Is overtime pay a regular occurrence?
- Do the children have income?
- Is child support received?

- Prospecting Household Activity Eligibility:
  - Are household members working the minimum number of hours to meet the hourly work requirement?
  - Is there a need for care?
  - Are parents available to care for the child(ren)?
  - Are parent(s) attending approved school/training?
  - Are child(ren) in school?

If the parent anticipates changes in household membership or changes in the reason for child care, set the length of the child care certification plan to end when the household change occurs. Once income eligibility is correctly determined, income fluctuations alone will not change eligibility for the duration of the child care certification plan.

Information provided by the family must be verified with corroborative documents and/or statements from third parties (i.e., employers, landlords, relatives, etc.). If needed, the CCR&R provides assistance in gathering and verifying family information.

⇒ Case-note the process used to determine eligibility and state what verification documentations were received.

Application Process:

All Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship applications must be entered into CCUBS whether they have been approved or denied.

The parent completes the following application process to receive a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

Parent

The parent contacts the district CCR&R agency. The agency provides the following information to the family:

- Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship application and benefit information (e.g. Child Care Scholarships brochure DPHHS-HCS/CC-009);
- Information on selecting quality child care; and
- Information on child care resource and referral services.

Timely Processing – 30 days

At the time the initial application is submitted, the parent completes the following forms and returns them to the CCR&R office by appointment or by mail. The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Application (DPHHS-HCS/CC-010) is valid for 30 days from the date it is received (date stamped) in the CCR&R office. The CCR&R date-stamp establishes the application-received date, which marks the beginning of the application period.

EXCEPTION: The applicant may receive one 15-day extension to submit required documentation in the possession of a third party, provided the applicant submits a request for an extension before the expiration of the 30-day application period.

⇒ Case-note the extension of the application period.

If the application materials are not complete in the time allotted, the CCR&R shall deny the application and document the facts in case notes. All applications, whether approved or denied, shall be entered into CCUBS.

a) Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Application (DPHHS-HCS/CC-010). The CCR&R date-stamps the complete application when it is received. A complete application includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   - Names of all household members;
   - Social Security Numbers of all household members (The CCR&R must make an effort to obtain Social Security Numbers of all household members, but should not deny eligibility based on not receiving this information in and of itself.);
   - Birth date of all household members;

- Address of head-of-household;
- Income (may be estimated);
- Activity hours, demonstrating the need for child care (may be estimated);
- Child support compliance;
- Release of Information initialed and signed; and
- Applicant signature, with date.

b) Request for Work/Training Verification (DPHHS-HCS/CC-011) is required for each working household member, completed and signed by each employer. If each member cannot obtain a signature from their employer, the last two months of wage stubs are acceptable. At least one type of verification is required for each adult attending school/training. School/Training may be verified by completing this form and having it signed by the training institution or by providing a copy of the student's official schedule/bill.

c) Verify Social Security numbers and birth certificates of all eligibile household members.

NOTE: If OPA has entered this information into TEAMS, accept this information as verified. Do not require it again.

d) Verify child support for each child, cooperation with child support enforcement, or grant good cause for not cooperating with child support with the Child Care Program – Notice of Requirement to Cooperate and Right to Claim Good Cause for Refusal to Cooperate in Child Support Enforcement (DPHHS-HCS/CC-019) form. The CCR&R must obtain verification when granting good cause, as outlined in Section 2-2.

e) Tribal families, who are dually eligible for CCDF, must provide written confirmation that they are not being served by their Tribal CCDF program.

The parent needs to establish who their child care provider is. If the parent

selects an approved licensed/registered child care provider, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist may collect child care provider information in three ways:

- The parent and the provider may complete the Child Care Service Plan Information (DPHHS-HCS/CC-015) form together, which verifies the child care arrangements;
- If the family is using an existing approved child care provider, the CCR&R may already have the information necessary to issue a child care certification plan by accessing the provider information in CCUBS; or
- The parent can provide child care provider information in the Best Beginnings Scholarship application.

Child Care Certification Plan

When Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are approved, the parent and the child care provider each receive a copy of the child care certification plan. The recommended standard time frame for a certification plan is a 6-month period for Non-TANF families, 3-month period for TANF families, and 3-month period for CPS children. CCR&R Eligibility Specialists have the right to shorten a certification plan if the parent's need for child care is uncertain through a certain time period other than the recommended standards of time for the TANF, Non-TANF and CPS participants. See Section 6-3 for Issuing the Child Care Certification Plan.

Limitation of Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship

The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship hours approved must mirror the approved parent's and child's activities:

- Parent's work, school, & FIA activities requiring child care, allowing for travel time.
- The child's schedule, e.g., school, or alternative care arrangements.

Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are not intended for respite care, unless services are provided under Child Protective Services.

A parent may not provide reciprocal care for the sole purpose of meeting work program requirements or collecting scholarship payments. Parents in a

reciprocal care arrangement must demonstrate that their schedules complement each other's need for child care.

For details, see Issuing the Certification Plan as outlined in Section 6-3.

LUP Application Date

If the provider is not licensed or registered, an In-home Care and/or Legally Unregistered Provider Application for State Payment Only (DPHHS-HCS/CC-087) form must be completed by the provider and submitted to the local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency for approval before a child care certification plan can be completed. A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship cannot be provided before the receipt date of the completed LUP application or the parent's approval date, whichever is later.

- ⇒ Make a case note to document the specific case circumstances.
- ⇒ Date-stamp all application materials and verification documents.

Re-certification - Parent/CCR&R

Re-certification is conducted periodically, usually every six months. Certification plans may be shorter if the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist prospects a household change, which suggests household or activity requirements need to be evaluated sooner. CCUBS sends out a re-certification reminder notice six weeks before the end of the certification, reminding parents to re-certify. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the CCR&R for re-certification.

If families do not re-certify by the end of the certification date, no additional closure notice is mailed. The certification plan reminder and certification plan notice serve as a notice. Close the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship effective the certification end-date.

Forms must be kept current, within one year old. If eligibility factors change or a form will become over one year old during the new certification plan, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist shall request updates for the following:

- ❑ Work/Training Verification (DPHHS-HCS/CC-011) form completed and signed by the employer and or training institution if the participant has either changed jobs, or it is a new school semester. If neither

change has occurred, then a class schedule or wage stubs would suffice.

- Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Application (DPHHS-HCS/CC-C10) form, if the household information has changed.
- Verify receipt of court-ordered child support for each child, cooperation with child support enforcement or grant good cause for not cooperating with child support with the Child Care Program – Notice of Requirement to Cooperate and Right to Claim Good Cause for Refusal to Cooperate in Child Support Enforcement (DPHHS-HCS/CC-019) form.
- The parent must verify hours billed for the previous month are accurate. Parents must review and sign a copy of their Explanation of Benefits, verifying the accuracy of their provider's billing.
- At each recertification, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist shall compare the previous month's invoices to the Explanation of Benefits and to the parent's wage stubs, work schedules, school schedules, etc. to insure billing accuracy. If questions arise in the review, refer to Invoice & Payment Process, as outlined in Section 6-7 and Overpayments, as outlined in Section 6-9.

CCR&R Business Processes

In order to ensure consistent application processing across the State, CCR&Rs will follow the following process when accepting Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship applications:

1. Register the application on CCUBS.
2. Ensure the completeness of the application.
3. Interview the applicant either by phone or in person to determine accuracy of documents submitted and to request any missing documentation.
4. If information is missing to determine eligibility, using CCUBS, send a Request for Information (RFI) notice to the family, requesting the information be submitted to the CCR&R within 30 days from the date the application was received in the CCR&R office.
5. Set an alert to check the status of the application in 30 days.
6. Determine eligibility by processing the completed application, or deny the application if missing documents have not been submitted within the allotted time period.

Waiting List

When the demand for Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships exceeds the resources, the Early Childhood Services Bureau (ECSB) maintains a statewide waiting list. The Early Childhood Services Bureau (ECSB) will select children from the Non-TANF waiting list, based on budget projections.

As a budget management strategy, the ECSB may serve families up to a specified level of poverty. Families participating in the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may remain in the program up to the upper limits of the sliding fee scale, subject to change reporting and re-certification policies.

CCUBS will send a notice to families of children selected from the waiting list. The family must respond within the 10-day timeframe to re-determine eligibility and secure their child care scholarship.

The CCR&R shall close the following cases:

- Families who do not respond within the 10-day timeframe.
- Families who are determined ineligible after being selected from the waiting list.

Priorities

A priority system is in place for Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships. Families who have children with special needs are given priority and are not subject to the waiting list. Among other Non-TANF applicants, priority is determined according to the following:

- Teen parents attending high school, GED, or equivalency programs;
- Families with lower income, relative to family size.

If families are equally eligible, the family with the earliest eligibility begin-date will be given priority.

Begin-Date, When Selected From the Waiting List

When the department has instituted a Waiting List for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships, a family's begin date will be determined by the following:

Full Income Eligible Waiting List: All families must wait until funding is available:

- If selected from the waiting list during the family's application month, the child care scholarship may begin on the application date.
- If selected from the waiting list after the family's application month, the child care scholarship may begin on the first of the month in which the family is selected from the waiting list.

Partial Income Eligible Waiting List – Families may enter the Best Beginnings Scholarship program if they are income eligible, under a specified level of poverty:

- If families are being served up to a specified level of poverty and the only delay involves waiting list processing which happens to cross the month end, an eligible family may begin a scholarship on the application date.

Waiting List Exceptions

Children with special needs are guaranteed child care assistance. Other policy exceptions will be managed as they arise. To request an exception, enter a case note on CCUBS and e-mail ECSB the following information with a request to remove the child(ren) from the waiting list:

- Child's name,
- Child's county, and
- CCUBS case number.

Children With Special Needs

If you have an application with a child(ren) with special needs, contact ECSB. 'Special Needs' is outlined in Section 1-4a of the child care manual. A child may have 'special needs' status with respect to waiting list priority even though the 'special needs rate' is not applicable for the child.

Policy Exception

When unusual circumstances occurs, which create a non-TANF waiting list policy exception, e-mail the Department. See Section 6-13 for Department staff lists.

Examples of unusual circumstance include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A non-TANF 'Application' date more than 30 days prior to the 'Status Date' on the CCUBS 'Program Funding Waitlist' screen;

- Retroactive changes resulting from a fair hearing;
- Provider grant recipient; or
- Worker error.

Presumptive Eligibility

When a waiting list is not in effect, families may be presumed eligible for the 30-day application period, while application information is verified. This provides the child care provider some assurance of payment for initial services. Presumptive eligibility is allowed once within a twelve-month period per family. No overpayment is due if the family is determined ineligible. However, if the household provides false information for the purpose of receiving child care assistance from a presumptive eligibility determination, the household will be responsible for repaying the overpayment. Families seeking presumptive eligibility must submit the following:

- The complete Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Application (DPHHS-HCS/CC-010) form, which indicates the family is likely to be eligible.

CCR&R:

⇒ Check case notes, for "Presumptive Eligibility" to determine if the family has used presumptive eligibility within the last twelve months.

⇒ Setup a 30-day certification plan.

⇒ Enter a case note, using "Presumptive Eligibility" as the note category.

⇒ If the verification process indicates the family is not eligible:
- Deny the case,
- Close the case, and
- Send a copy of the denial notice to the provider.

⇒ The closure date should be the same as the end-date on the certification plan.

⇒ Do not process an overpayment if the family is determined to be ineligible, unless eligibility information was misrepresented.

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

RECEIVED MAR 1 4 2007

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March 14, 2007

TO: Child Care Manual Holders

FROM: Anne Carpenter
DPHHS ECSB

SUBJECT: Bulletin #1 - Child Care Manual
Place this bulletin at the beginning of section 2-2 in the Child Care Manual. This supercedes Section 2-2 p. 6 of 12.

Section: Child Care Manual Section 2-2
Subject: Household Requirements
Effective Date: March 1, 2007

Child Support Requirements

In Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship households where one or both of the child's parents is absent from the home, the parent or guardian with whom the child resides, must cooperate in establishing paternity and obtaining court-ordered child support. There are four exceptions to this policy:

- In cases of single-parent adoption or where the absent parent has terminated parental rights, the parent is not required to cooperate in establishing paternity or obtaining child support.
- An adult acting in loco parentis, as designated in a military parent's family plan, is not required to pursue child support while the child's parent is deployed. The military family plan substitutes for child support arrangements.
- The requirement of cooperation in establishing paternity and obtaining child support may be waived if good cause is shown. Good cause policy is outlined in detail later in this manual section.
- The parent applying for child care assistance is under the age of 18.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Non-TANF Child Care Eligibility**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Household Requirements**

Supersedes: **Child Care 2-2 (5/1/05)**

References: **52-2-701 - 704 & 52-2-711 - 713 MCA**
Sections 37.78.215 (3), 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM
45 CFR Part 98.20 – 47

General Rule

As long as funding is available, Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are available to families who work and to teen parents attending high school or equivalency programs, whose gross income does not exceed 150% of poverty. Parents must have a need for child care and must receive court-ordered child support or maintain cooperation with child support for each child who has an absent parent:

- A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is not available for parents to care for their own children.
- If a parent is available to care for the child, there is no need for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. However, a need may still exist if the available parent is unable to provide suitable care for the child(ren).
- If child care is available at no cost, there is no need for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.
- If child care is available to the parent at a reduced cost, the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is based on the out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the parent.
- Parents may not concurrently care for each other's children to obtain a child care scholarship.

Depending on each household's reason for needing child care, child care certification plans for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are generally established for six (6) months.

Household Membership

Eligibility is based on the income and activities of Non-TANF household members. Individuals living in the child's home may be 'required household members' or 'optional household members,' depending upon their relation ship to the child(ren) in care.

If the family chooses to include an optional household member, all eligibility requirements apply to the optional household member. Once the family elects to include an optional member individual, the optional member may not be removed from the eligibility household, unless the individual physically leaves the home.

Required Household Members, as related to the child(ren):

- Natural, adoptive parent or stepparent of an intact family, regardless of living arrangements;
- Parent by common law marriage;
- Parent joined by a common child;
- Parent acting in loco parentis;
- Minor sibling, age 17 and under, including stepbrother, stepsister, half brother and half sister;
- Child receiving Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship;
- Child receiving TANF Cash benefits, or other subsidy, as a member of the household.

Optional Household Members, as related to the child(ren):

- Adult Sibling, age 18 and over;
- Aunt or Uncle;
- Grandparent;
- Great Grandparent;
- Parent's Significant Other.

Generally Excluded Household Members, as related to the child(ren):

- Absent natural, adoptive parent or stepparent is generally excluded. If an absent parent maintains parental rights, child support requirements apply.

  Absent Parent, means a natural or adoptive parent, or stepparent who is separated or divorced from the child's residential parent, or who was never married to the residential parent. An absent parent does not share family income, resources, or obligations with their child's household, except by providing child support or alimony.
- Exchange Students.

Household membership may be verified by corroborative information, such as rent receipts and statements from third parties.

EXAMPLE: The unmarried mother and father of an eligible child are living together. The father's 12 year-old son is also living in the household. All must be included in the household.

EXAMPLE: A mother, her 8-year-old daughter, her teenage daughter and the teenage daughter's child are living together. The teenager is attending high school. The teenager and her child may be considered a separate household from the rest of the family. However, if the mother wants child care for the 8-year-old sister, all members in the home may be considered as one household. The mother must meet the work requirements in order for the 8 year old to receive child care and the teenager must be attending high school or a GED program in order for her child to receive child care.

EXAMPLE: An unrelated man lives with a mother and her eligible child. The unrelated man is not a required household member. He may, however be included in the household if the family wants to include him. His income and his ability to care for the child(ren) are considered.

EXAMPLE: The father of an unborn child lives with a pregnant mother and her 3 year old child. The father of the unborn is not the father of the 3 year old. He is not a required household member until the child in common is born. He may be included before the child in common is born if the family chooses to include him. In which case, his income and his ability to care for the 3 year-old would be considered.

EXAMPLE: The husband of an intact family spends most of his time working and living out- of-state. He is a required household member.

EXAMPLE: The husband of an intact family is incarcerated. He is a required household member.

Common Law Marriage

If a couple considers themselves married under common law, both are included in the household.

NOTE: A common law marriage has all of the same rights & duties as a ceremonial marriage. If the income and availability of a step dad, married by ceremony is considered, then the same applies to a step dad married by common law. There is no "benchmark" at which a couple is deemed married by common law. However, if they are holding them selves out as common law husband and wife, then they are married under common law for all intents and purposes.

Joint Custody Arrangements

Parents whether separated or divorced who live apart and divide residential time with their children may each apply for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship regardless of the percentage of time the child lives with each parent. Eligibility will be determined by evaluating the need of each application. If the percentage of time spent in each household changes, the parent will need to report the change to the CCR&R. Child support must still be verified either by a court order, compliance with the DPHHS Child Support Enforcement (CSED), or the parent has demonstrated good cause for not cooperating with DPHHS Child Support Enforcement.

Prospecting a Temporary Absence from Household

Prospected absences, such as a change in residence for a child during the summer months, will be considered in determining the child care certification plan end-date. Eligibility and needs shall be evaluated when a household change is anticipated. Ask the family if household changes may occur during the next six months. Anticipate changes at semester breaks for household members attending school.

Remove a child's needs from the household if he/she is gone from their home for 30 days.

- If the children using the child care scholarship are absent from the household for 30 days or less, suspend the child care scholarship.
- If the children do not need child care for more than 30 days, close the child care scholarship.
- If one child, of two or more eligible children, in a household is gone

for 30 days or more, remove the child's participation from the child care scholarship.

EXAMPLE: A mother and her two children, aged 3 and 7 live together. The 7 year old goes to his father's home in the summer and is gone from June 15th through August 15th. Remove the 7 year-old's needs for the month of July. Adjust the co-payment, for the month following the change.

EXAMPLE: A mother and her 8-year-old daughter live together. In the summer, the child goes to visit her father from June 15 to August 15. Close the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

EXAMPLE: A teacher does not need child care during the summer months. Close the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

Unanticipated Change

An unanticipated household change shall be reported to the CCR&R within 10 days. See "Change Reporting" for more information.

Evaluating the Non-TANF Household

The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist evaluates the following factors in determining household eligibility:

- The need for child care, based on the ability and availability of adults to care for the child(ren).
- The financial eligibility, based on the income of each household member, including children.
- The minimum hourly work requirement, based on the activities and schedule of each household member.
- Any anticipated changes in the household, such as
  - A change in a parent's school/training schedule,
  - A change in a child's school/training schedule,
  - An anticipated change in the child's residence.

Child Support Requirement

In Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship households where one or both of the child's parents is absent from the home, the parent or guardian with whom the child resides, must cooperate in establishing paternity and obtaining court-ordered child support. There are three exceptions to this policy:

- In cases of single-parent adoption or where the absent parent has terminated parental rights, the parent is not required to cooperate in establishing paternity or obtaining child support.
- An adult acting in loco parentis, as designated in a military parent's family plan, is not required to pursue child support while the child's parent is deployed. The military family plan substitutes for child support arrangements.
- The requirement of cooperation in establishing paternity and obtaining child support may be waived if good cause is shown. Good cause policy is outlined in detail later in this manual section.

CCR&Rs are not equipped or authorized to evaluate the adequacy of informal child support arrangements. Child support arrangements must be evaluated and approved, or recognized by the Montana district court system or the Child Support Enforcement Division of DPHHS.

During the application process for a Best Beginnings Scholarship or in the middle of a certification period, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist may become aware of a parent(s) who is in the process of separating from their spouse or in the middle of divorce proceedings. In these situations, the parent must be in compliance with the child support requirement within 30 days of the change. The parent can be in compliance with the child support requirement in one of the following ways:

- The parent must apply with CSED and demonstrate they are in compliance through written documentation;
- The parent must have a Montana District Court order on record, be receiving child support payments and provide the CCR&R with a copy. If the parent is not receiving payments established through the court order, the parent must apply with CSED; or
- The parent must have appropriate reasons and documentation to apply for good cause.

Compliance with child support policies is a basic condition of eligibility for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

⇒ If the parent is not meeting the child support requirement, deny the scholarship application or close the scholarship case with appropriate notice.

Child Support Verification

Families, who have an absent natural or adoptive parent must verify one of the following:

- The parent receives child support payments under a child support order recognized by a Montana District Court for each child with an absent parent and can verify payments received with written documentation. A copy of the order must be in the parent's file at the CCR&R.
- The parent applies for services with DPHHS Child Support Enforcement (CSED) for each child for whom court-ordered child support is not received. Cooperation with DPHHS Child Support Enforcement must be maintained while receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. Cooperation with DPHHS Child Support Enforcement means that the parent has completed the required application and any other documents requested from CSED. The application and any other documents requested by CSED are to provide CSED enough information to determine whether child support can be established and at what amount child support will be established.

  Note: If CSED determines that child support is uncollectible, the CCR&R must receive a statement from CSED stating the parent is in-compliance with CSED.
- The parent demonstrates and has supporting evidence for good cause to be determined for not cooperating with DPHHS Child Support Enforcement.
- The parent is acting in loco parentis under a Military Parenting Plan.
- The parent is receiving child support from another state and this can be verified by written documentation.

The Montana DPHHS Child Support Enforcement Division offers payment information online at https://app.discoveringmontana.com/csed/index.html

The site requires the child support case number and the parent's Social Security Number.

If a parent is not receiving child support and has good cause not to cooperate with CSED, the Notice of Requirement to Cooperate . . .DPHHS-HCS/CC-019 form may be used in the good-cause determination process. Good cause may be claimed at application time or anytime during the child support collection process. Good-cause status is reviewed at each eligibility re-determination.

Parents dissatisfied with Child Support Enforcement Division determinations must appeal through CSED.

Incarcerated Parent(s)

If one parent of an intact family is incarcerated, a child support order is not required. The family should report when the incarcerated parent is released and when they return to the household.

If an absent parent is incarcerated and the family does not consider themselves intact, cooperation with child support policy is required by the parent applying for child care assistance.

If both parents are incarcerated, the family is not intact and a child support order is required for the person acting in loco parentis.

CSED Services

Child Support Enforcement information and applications are available by calling the CSED at 1-800-346-KIDS (5437). CSED services include the following:

- Application materials;
- Informational materials;
- Establishing paternity;
- Establishing child support orders for separated or divorced parents; and
- Parents receive a letter acknowledging application.

Good Cause for Not Cooperating with Child Support Enforcement

Good cause for not cooperating with child support enforcement is determined by the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist. Parents receive a Child Care Program – Notice of Requirement to Cooperate and Right to Claim Good Cause for Refusal to Cooperate in Child Support Enforcement (DPHHS-HCS/CC-019) form when applying for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

The requirement of cooperation in establishing paternity and obtaining child support may be waived if good cause is shown. Good cause exists if one of the following circumstances exists and as a result of that circumstance cooperation would be detrimental to the child:

- cooperation is likely to result in substantial danger, physical harm, undue harassment or severe mental anguish to the child or the parent;
- the child was conceived as a result of forcible rape or an incestuous relationship;
- the parent is planning to relinquish or has relinquished the child to a public or licensed social agency for the purpose of adoption;
- legal proceedings for the adoption of the child are pending before a court of competent jurisdiction;
- the parental rights to the child have been terminated by a court of competent jurisdiction; or
- any other situation that makes cooperation with child support requirements detrimental to the child.

A parent who claims to have good cause for refusing to cooperate must:

- provide evidence to substantiate the claim; or
- provide sufficient information to permit an investigation to determine whether good cause exists.

A parent may apply for good cause at the time of application, during a report change, or at re-certification. A child care scholarship will not be denied, delayed, or discontinued pending a determination of good cause for refusal to cooperate if the parent has complied with the requirements above. However, if it is ultimately determined that good cause does not exist and the recipient continues to refuse to cooperate, the department may recover child care scholarship amounts paid pending the determination of good cause.

In cases where good cause has been found, a review must be held at each re-certification to determine whether there has been any change in circumstances such that good cause no longer exists.

The CCR&R will promptly notify the child support enforcement division of all open cases in which it has been determined that there is good cause for refusal to cooperate in establishing paternity or obtaining child support.

The parent shall provide the child care resource and referral agency with the evidence needed to determine whether the parent has good cause for refusing to cooperate. (If the reason for claiming good cause is fear of physical harm and it is impossible to obtain medical records, law enforcement records or court documents as evidence, the child care resource and referral agency may still be able to make a good cause determination by collecting notarized statements or affidavits from individuals who might have knowledge of the circumstances providing the basis of the parent's good cause claim.)

When a parent or parents refuse to cooperate in establishing paternity or obtaining child or medical support, the family will be ineligible for a Best Beginnings Child care Scholarship.

Evidence to Support Good Cause to Not Cooperate with Child Support Enforcement

The following are examples of acceptable kinds of evidence the child care resource and referral agency can use in determining if good cause exists:

- Medical or law enforcement records, which indicate that the child was conceived as the result of incest or forcible rape;
- Court documents or other records which indicate that legal proceedings for adoption are pending in court;
- Court, medical, criminal, child protective services, social services, psychological, or law enforcement records which indicate that the alleged or absent parent might inflict physical or emotional harm to the parent or the child;
- Medical records which indicate emotional health history and present health status of the parent or the child for whom support

would be sought; or written statements from a mental health professional indicating a diagnosis or prognosis concerning the emotional health of the parent or the child;

- A written statement from a public or private agency confirming that the parent is being assisted in resolving the issue of whether to keep or give up the child for adoption;
- Affidavit or notarized statement from individuals, including friends, neighbors, clergymen, social workers, and medical professionals who might have knowledge of the circumstances providing the basis of the parent's good cause claim; or
- If the OPA Eligibility Case Manager has determined good cause, verify and accept the valid good cause determination.

Documenting Child Support

Case notes should be done within the 30-day application period. When there is an absent parent:

- ⇒ CCUBS must show verified child support income, or;
- ⇒ Case files must document the parent's application for, and cooperation with, child support services, or;
- ⇒ Case notes and case files must document corroborated good cause for not cooperating with child support, or;
- ⇒ Case notes and case files must document the absent parent has relinquished parental rights, or;
- ⇒ Case notes must show evidence of a Military Parenting Plan is in place.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Non-TANF Child Care**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Non-TANF Activity Requirements**

Supersedes: **Child Care 2-3 (5/01/05)**

References: **52-2-701 - 704 & 52-2-711 - 713 MCA**
Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM
45 CFR Part 98.20 – 47

General Rule

Parents qualifying for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships participate in one of these general activities:

- Employed and meeting a minimum hourly requirement; or
- Employed and attending school or a training program; or
- A teen parent attending high school, GED, or equivalency program.

Detailed activity requirements for each category follow below:

Minimum Hourly Work Requirement

To be eligible for a Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, parents must be employed at paid legal labor or self-employed, and meet a minimum hourly work requirement each month:

- Two-parent families shall work a minimum of 120 hours per month with either or both parents working any combination of hours.
- Single-parent families shall work a minimum of 60 hours per month.
- Single-parent families shall work a minimum of 40 hours per month while the parent attends school or training full time, based on the school's guidelines. (Single parents may attend part-time, if working 60 hours per month, as mentioned above.)

Examples of employment verification include the following:

- Wage stubs;
- Work Verification forms (DPHHS-HCS/CC-011);
- Tax returns;
- Business ledgers;
- Work schedules; and/or
- Worker's Compensation Exemption (self-employed).

Initial Partial Month of Employment

The current month's income may be less than that anticipated in future months for the parent. A child care certification plan may be issued for the current month based on the current month's income and another certification plan may be issued for subsequent months based on prospected income. This avoids an unnecessarily high co-payment during the parent's first partial month of employment.

Parent with a Severe Disability

The minimum hourly work requirement for a parent with severe disability may be waived if the following conditions are met:

A working parent who has a severe disability, which prevents them from meeting a minimum hourly work requirement, is not required to meet an hourly work requirement to qualify for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship for employment hours. All of the following restrictions apply:

- A licensed physician, psychologist or psychiatrist must determine that the parent with a disability is unable to work the number of hours required to receive a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.
- The family must otherwise qualify for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.
- If the parent does not meet the minimum hourly work requirement, they are not eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship during school/training time.

  EXAMPLE: A mother, who receives SSI and a child-only TANF Cash grant, may be able to work nine (9) hours each week. A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be available during her work hours. However, she would not qualify for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship for any post-secondary school/training hours.

In a two-parent household, if one parent has a disability and is unable to care for his/her child(ren), the work requirement for the disabled parent may be waived. The following restrictions apply:

- A licensed physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist must determine the parent to be unable to care for their child(ren).
- The family must otherwise qualify for a Best Beginnings Child Care

Scholarship.

- The able-bodied parent shall meet a single parent minimum hourly work requirement.

Employed and Attending School/Training

If the family meets the eligibility requirements for employment, a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be available to parents attending post-secondary education, vocational training, high school or GED equivalency programs which will lead to a recognized occupation for which jobs exist within Montana. (Refer to Department of Labor information regarding employment in Montana.) All of the following restrictions apply:

- Parents must achieve satisfactory training progress as defined by the approved training institution. Satisfactory training progress can be verified through grade slips and/or fee receipts.
- All school/training must be scheduled and attended out-of-the parent's home. Internet coursework/training is not an activity eligible for child care assistance unless the parent does not have a computer and/or Internet to complete this coursework in their home.
- Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are not available to pursue post secondary education above a bachelor's degree. Master's and doctoral students' school hours do not qualify for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.
- Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are not available for training and education activities if a parent has earned a post-secondary education degree or training certificate within the last five years.

  NOTE: A student who enrolls in a continuous four-year program, which happens to issue a two-year certificate or degree at the midpoint of the student's intended educational goal, is not subject to this five-year limitation.
- If the parent received the last post-secondary education degree or training certificate over five years ago, a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be allowed for a second certificate or bachelor's degree.

EXAMPLE: A participant received a Bachelor's Degree in Education in 1990. She was unable to find a teaching job in her field. In 1998, she

returns to college to get certified in a second subject area. If she meets all other eligibility factors, a child care scholarship is available for both work and school hours.

EXAMPLE: A participant received a Bachelor's Degree in Education in 1990. She was unable to find a teaching job in her field. In 1998, she begins college to get a master's degree. She is not eligible for a child care scholarship during her post-secondary education hours, but she is eligible during work hours.

EXAMPLE: A student enrolls in the Forestry program with the intent of earning a Bachelor's degree. The four-year Forestry program is arranged so the student's first two years of school occur at Dawson Community College and the second two years occur at the University of Montana. If Dawson issues a two-year certificate or degree, the student may continue to apply for a child care scholarship while he pursues the intended Bachelor's degree at the University of Montana.

EXAMPLE: A student enrolls in the Stone Child Tribal Community College with the intent to earn a Bachelor's degree in Education. Because she is close to home, she does not need a child care scholarship for the first two years. She earns an Associates degree in Liberal Arts from Stone Child. She moves to Havre to continue her pursuit of a Bachelor's degree. Although there is no formal program connecting Stone Child and Northern, she is eligible to apply for a child care scholarship to continue her education toward a Bachelor's degree in Education.

Two exceptions apply to the work requirement for Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship parents attending post-secondary education or short term training:

1. A post-secondary education student may find that clinical or student teaching requirements become a barrier to finishing school, while meeting the minimum hourly work requirement. The minimum hourly work requirement may be waived while a parent participates in a full-time field experience or a full-time combination of field experience and course work required for

graduation in the parent's curriculum.

2. The work requirement may be waived during a period of short-term, full time training, which leads to a high probability of employment. All of the following restrictions apply:

- The training may last no more than six weeks.
- The training must be required for employment.
- The applicant shall provide a written training verification signed by the approved training institution.
- The applicant shall have a letter from a potential employer stating that there is a high probability of employment upon completion of training.

Teen Parents

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A teen parent who needs child care in order to attend high school, GED, or an equivalency program may be eligible for a child care scholarship. The student's work requirement is waived while attending high school, GED, or an equivalency program. If the teen parent lives with their parents, they may be considered a separate household from their own parents for the purposes of eligibility and co-payment determination. The teen parent must:

- be under the age of 20; and
- be attending high school, GED, or an equivalency program; and
- need child care to attend high school, GED, or an equivalency program; and
- meet financial eligibility requirements; and
- pay a co-payment.

Teen parents intending to return to high school, GED, or an equivalency program may receive a child care scholarship while working during breaks in the school schedule.

⇒ Use 'Working' as the reason for care.

Parents in their teens who do not attend high school, GED, or an equivalency program are subject to work requirements.

⇒ Assess the need for child care.

⇒ Waive the work requirement only for the teen parent who is attending high school, GED, or an equivalency program.

Family Loses Eligibility

Families may lose eligibility during a child care certification plan. Evaluate the circumstances in an effort to offer continuity of care for the child and family. See Continuity of Care, as outlined in Section 6-6.

Non-TANF:

- ⇒ End-date the certification plan concurrent with the end of eligibility.
- ⇒ If a family fails to recertify, the certification plan expiration serves as the closure notice.
- ⇒ If child care will end before the current certification plan expires, notify the parent & provider in writing.
- ⇒ Note the closure reason.
- ⇒ Case note the assessment leading to the closure, when eligibility guidelines are no longer met by the family.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Non-TANF Child Care**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Household Income**

Supersedes: **Child Care 2-4 (5/01/05)**

References: **45 CFR 98.20; 52-2-701 - 704; 52-2-713 MCA**
ARM 37.80.201 - 202

General Rule

The gross income of all adult and minor household members is evaluated in determining household eligibility. Please refer to Household Membership in Section 2-2 'Household Requirements' of this manual.

The gross amount of income expected to be available for current use, including unearned and earned income, unless specifically excluded, is counted.

⇒ All income, even if excluded by policy, must be entered in CCUBS to ensure proper eligibility processing.

Family Shall Obtain All Income

As a condition of eligibility, each household must actively seek all income for which the household has legal claim, unless they can show good cause for not doing so. However, eligibility may not be denied if the individual did not make income information available because he/she was unaware of its existence and/or availability.

> EXAMPLE: A divorce decree/parenting plan indicates the absent parent shall pay child care until the residential parent is finished with school. Additionally, the absent parent shall pay 50% of the children's medical costs. Child support is specified separately. The residential parent shall pursue collecting child care and medical support from the obligor, which may not be collectable through CSED until a judgment is obtained.

All household income must be verified and summarized in case notes. The applicant's written or verbal statement alone is not verification.

⇒ State the type of verification and other pertinent information in Case Notes by answering the questions - who, when, what, and how.

⇒ View the document and enter the data in CCUBS. Make a copy of the

document if allowable by the applicant and return the original to the applicant or participant. It is not necessary to keep a hard copy of the verification in the case file.

⇒ If verbal verification is obtained from a collateral contact, document the contact in Case Notes by answering the questions - who, when, what, how.

Verifying Unearned Income

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide verification of his/her unearned income. This verification is not limited to, but may include, any of the following sources:

- Attorney Statement;
- Bureau of Indian Affairs Records;
- Cash Income Records from Rental Property, Farm Produce, Boarders-lodgers, etc.
- Child Support Enforcement Division;
- Child Support Receipts;
- College and University Financial Aids Records;
- Correspondence on Benefits;
- Correspondence on SSA Benefits;
- County Clerk of the Court Records;
- Divorce Decree (may include child support, medical support, child care, alimony);
- Financial Institution Records;
- Income Tax Record - State & Federal;
- Insurance Company Records;
- Lodge, Club, or Fraternal Organization Record;
- Parenting Plan (may include child support, medical support, child care)
- Pension Award Notice;
- Personal Records of Contributions--Money orders or, canceled checks;
- Railroad Retirement Award Letter;
- Recipient's statement from person making a contribution (a current child support order is required for child support payments);
- RSDI Benefit Check or Award Letter;
- Social Security Administration Bendex interface (TEAMS);
- Social Security Administration Records;

- Unemployment Compensation Award letter;
- Union Records;
- Veteran's Administration;
- Veteran's Administration Award Notice;
- Workmen's Compensation Benefits Award Notice; and/or
- Workmen's Compensation Records.

Earned Income

The term earned income encompasses cash or in-kind income earned by an individual through the receipt of wages, salary, commissions, or profit from activities in which he/she is engaged as a self-employed individual or as an employee. Earned income is measured as gross earned income before any deductions such as FICA, taxes, garnishments, and cafeteria plans, etc., the individual receives. It includes earnings over a period of time for which settlement is made at one given time, as in the instance of sale of farm crops, livestock, poultry, or logging.

With reference to commissions, wages, or salary, earned income means the total amount, irrespective of personal expenses, such as income tax deductions, lunches, and transportation to and from work, and irrespective of expenses of employment which are not personal, such as the cost of tools, materials, special uniforms, or transportation to call on customers.

Verifying Earned Income

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide verification of his/her earned income. The applicant's income and work schedule shall be provided to the CCR&R on the Release of Information/Request for Verification (DPHHS-HCS/CC-011) form. If the employer refuses to complete the form or if the work schedule is variable, CCR&Rs may corroborate the parent's statement with the following information:

- Bookkeeping records;
- Employer's payroll records;
- Employer's verbal/written statement of earnings;
- Employment service records;
- Income tax returns - state/federal;
- Receipts for work-related expenses (Sole proprietorship, Partnership,

S-corporation);
- Sales/services receipts;
- State Department of Revenue;
- Tax statements;
- W-2 forms; and/or
- Wage/salary stubs.

Self-Employment

Self-employment is the act of engaging in a trade or business except as an employee. A trade or business is generally an activity carried on for a livelihood or in good faith to make a profit. However, business losses do not offset income earned as an employee.

The individual does not need to actually make a profit to be in a trade or business as long as a profit motive exists. Evaluating the regularity of activities and transactions and the production of income usually indicates this motive. Self-employment activities must be corroborated when using self employment work time to meet the minimum hourly work requirement.

Accept the participant's statement that he/she had no self-employment earnings during the relevant months, unless there is evidence to the contrary.

Self-employment businesses typically include the following:
- Sole Proprietorships, where the owner receives the profits.
- Partnerships, where profits are distributed among partners.
- S-Corporations, where profits flow through the corporate structure to the shareholder/owners.

Corporations are business entities in which the corporation receives the profits. Individuals working for corporations are considered employees, although some individuals doing work on behalf of the corporation may be self-employed. Examples of self-employed include:
- A board member, who receives payment only for board activities;
- An independent contractor; or
- An independent consultant.

Employee or Self-Employed?

An individual is not self-employed if performing services that can be controlled by an employer. If an employer-employee relationship exists (no matter what the relationship is called), the individual is not self-employed.

The source of the income and the individual's involvement in the activity from which the income is generated will determine whether it is self-employment income.

EXAMPLE: Income from rental property, including roomer/boarder income, is self-employment income unless all activities are conducted by an outside agency. If an outside agency, such as a realtor, conducts all activities involved in renting property, the proceeds are treated as unearned income.

EXAMPLE: An individual is engaged in fixing televisions and radios in his spare time. He has a shop, equipment, and tools. He advertises his business. This individual is considered self-employed in a trade or business.

Self-Employment Income

The dollar amount of gross self-employment income is determined by using as many sources as necessary to determine gross income and expenses, such as the following:

- Tax returns or business records which cover the relevant period;
- Participant's statement of estimated earnings;
- Receipts for business expenses;
- Receipts for goods and services provided; and
- A signed statement from bank.

⇒ Enter NET self-employment income in CCUBS.

EXAMPLE: Mrs. Stevens is self-employed as a sales representative. Her gross receipts for the month are $200. She claims as business expenses the wholesale price of the items she orders and expenses for 50 miles of transportation. Policy allows a flat rate per mile for business-related travel, and Mrs. Stevens does not document higher expenses.

Gross receipts = $200, retail price of items sold.

Business expenses = $80, wholesale price of items ordered.

Transportation cost = $18, to make sales and deliver orders (miles times the state rate per mile).

Calculation of Gross Self-Employment Income:
$200 -- Gross receipts
-98 -- Business expenses
$102 -- Net Self-Employment Income.

➢ EXAMPLE: Mr. & Mrs. Stevens are married and are self-employed in separate businesses. When determining income for this family, all self-employment income shall be added together, this will allow the losses of one business to offset the gains from another. After reviewing the taxes, Mr. Stevens has a loss of $4000 for the year, but Mrs. Stevens has a gain of $6000 for the year, their combined income would equal a positive $2000 for the year.

($4,000) – Mr. Stevens gross income
+$6,000 –Mrs. Stevens gross income
$2,000 combined gross income

Determining Business Expenses

With respect to self-employment, earned income means the total profit from a business enterprise, farming, etc., resulting from a comparison of the gross receipts with the business expenses, i.e., expenses directly related to producing the goods or service and without which the goods or services could not be produced.

Allowable business expenses are subtracted from the gross receipts to determine net self-employment income. Allowable expenses must directly relate to the production of income. If an expense is incurred for the business and for personal purposes, it must be divided proportionately.

EXAMPLE: If the home is used in the business, expenses can be deducted only for that part of the home that is used both regularly and exclusively for the business.

The following expenses are not allowable as a deduction when determining eligibility:

- Expenses derived from capital investments:
  - Depreciation (generally derived from equipment, buildings, and building improvements);
  - Schedule 179 Expense Deduction (generally equipment);
  - Amortization (generally derived from land, business start-up costs, organizational costs for partnership or corporation);
  - Depletion (generally derived from mineral property or standing timber);
  - Business Start-up Costs - The cost of starting a business is not allowed as an expense for eligibility purposes. The IRS considers start-up costs a capital expense and allows the business to amortize the expense over a period; and
  - Personal and entertainment expenses are not an allowable deduction for eligibility purposes. These expenses should not be found on a tax return.
- Payments on the principal portion of loan payments used to purchase capital assets or durable goods. (The interest portion of the loan is an allowable expense.)
- Personal expenses should not be claimed as business expenses:
  - Personal business and entertainment expenses and
  - Personal transportation.

A business typically has many different kinds of costs during the year. Some of these costs are counted as part of the investment in the business. They must be "capitalized", are not allowable business expenses, and are known as **capital expenditures or capital expenses.** Generally, three kinds of costs must be capitalized:

1) **Going into business**. The costs of getting started in a business before actually beginning business operations are all capital expenses. This may

include the cost of such things as advertising, travel, utilities, repairs, and employees' wages. These are often the same kind of expenses that could be deducted if they occur after the business is opened.

2) **Business assets.** The cost of any asset that will be used in the business for more than one year is a capital expense. There are many different kinds of business assets - for example, land, buildings, machinery, trucks, books, furniture, patents, and franchise rights.

3) **Improvements.** The costs of making improvements to a business asset are also a capital expense, if the improvements add to the value of the asset, appreciably lengthen the time it can be used, or adapt it to a different use. However, normal repair costs are deducted as business expenses and not capitalized. Examples of improvements are:
   - new electric wiring;
   - a new roof;
   - new floor;
   - new plumbing;
   - bricking up windows to strengthen a wall;
   - lighting improvements;
   - asbestos abatement; and
   - abatement of hazardous substances.

To distinguish between capital expenses and allowable expenses several different examples are discussed below.

Business motor vehicles. The cost of a motor vehicle purchased to use in the business is usually capitalized. Its cost can be recovered through annual deductions for depreciation. Depreciation is NOT an allowable business expense under program policy.

NOTE: Repairs made to the business vehicle are allowable expenses. However, amounts paid for reconditioning and overhaul of business vehicles are capital expenses.

Roads and driveways. The cost of building a private road on the business

property and the cost of replacing a gravel driveway with a concrete one are capital expenses which may be able to depreciate. The cost of maintaining a private road on the business property is allowable as an ordinary and necessary business expense.

Tools. Amounts spent for tools used in the business are deductible expenses if the tools wear out and are thrown away within one year from the date of purchase.

Machinery. The cost of replacing short-lived parts of a machine to keep it in good working condition and not to add to its life is allowable as an ordinary and necessary expense.

Heating equipment. The cost of changing from one heating system to another is a capital expense and not a deductible expense.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Non-TANF Child Care**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Prospective Budgeting**

Supersedes: **Child Care 2-5 (5/01/05)**

References: **45 CFR 98.20; 52-2-701 - 704; 52-2-713 MCA**
ARM 37.80.201 - 202

General Rule

Eligibility is based on the income anticipated in future months. Prospected income is applied to future scholarship months. Prospected income is applied to the current month only when it applies to a new application.

The current month's income may be less than that anticipated in future months. Eligibility may be determined for the current month based on the current month's income and eligibility may be issued for subsequent months based on prospected income. This avoids an unnecessarily high co-payment during the parent's first partial month of employment.

Assuming income eligibility is prospected correctly, income fluctuations will not affect eligibility during the current certification plan. If eligibility is determined with incorrect information, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist shall proceed with a correction process.

Verify Income

Information provided by the applicant/participant must be verified with corroborative documents and/or statements from third parties (i.e., employers, CSED, etc.). If needed, assistance is provided to the applicant.

⇒ Case note the eligibility determination and verification process.

Prospecting Income

To prospectively budget countable monthly income, use one or a combination of the following methods:

1. **Anticipating-** used when none of the other methods are allowed or appropriate.

   Note: The **13 week calculation** is only used for income received monthly or semi-monthly (received twice a month with set pay dates, i.e. 1st and 15th). It is not used if income is a set salaried amount.

2. **Factoring-** used for weekly or bi-weekly income.

3. **Averaging**- used when there is a reliable history of income; sometimes used in combination with the factoring method.

4. **Annualizing**- used for contractual, self-employment or other income.

The method selected will depend on the frequency of the receipt of income and other related circumstances.

Actual Income

Actual income is used when:

- computing an overpayment;
- the income is for the month of application, and the income is from a new or terminated source, and the participant did not receive a full month of income.

NOTE: If all bi-weekly pay stubs are provided in the month of application, income must be factored even when they did not receive a third paycheck.

Anticipating Income Method

The anticipating monthly countable income method is used when no other budgeting method is allowed or appropriate. Use this budgeting method when:

- A full month's income is not expected because the individual will not be working or getting paid for at least one pay period during the month (e.g., new employment, unpaid extended sick leave, or unpaid vacation); or
- Income is from a terminated source (e.g., lay-off or other job termination); or
- Income history is not reliable; or
- Significant income change is expected in the future (e.g., promotion, part-time to full-time or vice versa, additional job, transfer, etc.).

NOTE: When an expected income change is reported, more detailed information is needed, schedule a review, complete a desk audit, or set

an alert for the time the change is expected. Allow time to incorporate the new information into the best estimate determination and to give timely notice. Case note which budgeting method was used to prospect income for the case. Include the following:

1. When and how the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist learned of the expected change;
2. What the expected change will be (raise, new job, lay off, etc.);
3. The amount of the change and when it will happen **or** the nature of the change if it is not known but follow-up has been scheduled (review, desk audit, alert);
4. How the new Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship was calculated (i.e., number of hours, rate of pay, days off, etc.); and
5. The verification used (e.g., employer statement).

13-Week Calculation

Anticipating income using a 13-week calculation can be used to determine the best estimate of monthly or semi-monthly income, which does not have a reliable history to average but is expected to continue for at least the next three months. This method is based on the fact that every three-month period contains 13 weeks. Multiply the average hours per week by hourly wage. Then multiply by 13 and divide by 3 months. If income is a set salaried amount this calculation cannot be used.

NOTE: Semi-monthly means received twice a month with set pay dates, (e.g., 1st and 15th).

EXAMPLE: On February 2, an employer statement was received which indicates an individual's work hours will increase to 40 hours per week. The wage will continue at $5.85 per hour and pay dates will continue to be semi-monthly on the 1st and 15th.

40 X $5.85 = $234/wk X 13 wks = $3,042 / 3 months = $1,014 per month. The $1,014 would be used as the best estimate of monthly income. Case notes clearly document action taken including the above calculation.

NOTE: When either a reliable income history is reported or verification is received of salaried amount (a fixed amount per pay check independent of how many days are worked) income should be averaged instead of using the 13-week method.

EXAMPLE:On 08/10/98, Dolores provides an employer statement indicating she started working 08/08/98 and is paid twice a month on the 15th and the 30th for salaried employment (i.e., gross pay per pay period is $350). September Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is determined based on $350 X 2 = $700 per month.

13 Week Calculation Not Used

The 13 week calculation cannot be used if monthly or semi-monthly income is from:

1. A partial month of employment (i.e., the individual is not expected to work or get paid for at least one week of the month);
2. Employment which is not expected to last a full quarter (13 weeks);or
3. Salaried employment (monthly income does not fluctuate).

To determine the best estimate in the first two situations actual days must be counted taking into consideration days off and paid-holidays instead of using the 13-week method. The best estimate for salaried employment is to average; multiply the 1st semi-monthly check by 2.

EXAMPLE: The application was received November 9th. Pay dates are the 5th and 20th with pay periods ending the 31st and 15th each month. The participant earns $5.95 per hour, averages 40 hours per week, is off on Fridays and Saturdays, and is paid for holidays. Income received in November is expected to be for ten 8-hour days (10 days X 8 hours = 80 hours X $5.95 = $476 for November).

December, January and February income can be determined using the 13- week method because full monthly income is anticipated each month.

Factoring Income

The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program requires that income received weekly or bi-weekly (every two weeks) be factored. If there is a reliable history of income, it is a best practice to average and then factor.

NOTE: Child support income and legally obligated child support payments, can only be factored if truly received/paid on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

When countable income is received weekly (e.g., every Friday) or bi-weekly (e.g., every other Friday), the income factoring method must be used to determine countable monthly income unless one of the factoring exceptions is met on page 6. If income fluctuates and verification of a reliable history has been provided, average to get a weekly or bi-weekly amount and then factor to get a monthly amount.

NOTE: If weekly or bi-weekly pay checks are provided for the month of application, the checks must be averaged and factored even if they did not receive a 3rd or 5th check in the month of application.

1. To factor weekly income, the weekly income amount (actual or average) will be multiplied by 4.3 to determine a monthly amount; or
2. To factor bi-weekly (i.e., every two weeks) income, the bi-weekly income amount will be multiplied by 2.15 to determine a monthly amount.

EXAMPLE #1: Ginny started a new job working 40 hours per week at $6.50 per hour and is paid weekly. Ginny's monthly income is determined using 40 hrs X $6.50 = $260 X 4.3; $1,118 is her monthly factored income.

EXAMPLE #2: Grace works for the State of Montana. She works full time and earns $7.00 per hour. She is paid bi-weekly, every other Wednesday. She receives $560 gross income in each paycheck. Grace's monthly income is determined using $560 X 2.15; $1,204 is her monthly factored income.

⇒ Enter a case note, stating the method and amounts used to determine income.

NOTE: It is not appropriate to factor hours separately from income. However, the order in which the calculation occurs does not matter.

EXAMPLE: 20 hours per week at $5.85 per hour and paid weekly: Either of the following are acceptable:

20 X 5.85 X 4.3 = $503.10
20 X 4.3 X 5.85 = $503.10

Factoring Exception

An exception to the factoring method for weekly or bi-weekly income occurs when the participant will not work for one full pay period (i.e., verification is provided that a participant will not be paid for hours normally worked such as unpaid sick leave due to scheduled surgery or unpaid vacation, etc.) In this situation, the anticipating budgeting method of counting actual days should be used to determine the best estimate.

NOTE: Days off and paid holidays must be taken into consideration.

⇒ Case notes must clearly document why weekly or bi-weekly income was not factored and details of how income was anticipated.

Averaging Income Method

Income averaging is used when there is a reliable income history. It is sometimes used in combination with factoring. Be sure to ask the applicant/participant if the average is expected to continue and case note. When averaging, look for patterns of overtime.

1. The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist and the participant must agree on:
   a. a representative period of time;
   b. the number of paychecks; and
   c. the pay dates.

NOTE: Paychecks, which are agreed on as unusually high or low

should be disregarded unless the trend is anticipated to continue into the prospective period.

NOTE: It is recommended that an employer statement rather than a client statement be used as verification.

2. Divide the total income received during the representative period by the number of pay dates in the period to determine an average amount per pay date.

3. If income is received:
   a. Monthly or semi-monthly, multiply the average pay date amount by the number of pay dates in a month to arrive at the average monthly income.
   b. Weekly or bi-weekly, multiply the average pay date amount by 4.3 (weekly) or 2.15 (bi-weekly) to arrive at the average monthly income.

   NOTE: Do not average income when significant income changes are expected in the prospective period. Instead, use the anticipating income method, counting days in pay period etc.

4. Case note, stating the method used (averaging or averaging and factoring) to determine income eligibility, and:
   a. what the agreed upon representative period of time was;
   b. what information was used to calculate the average pay date amount (gross pay received pay date #1 + gross pay received pay date #2, etc. divided by the number of pay dates used); and
      NOTE: If certain paychecks were excluded in the averaging process, case notes must clearly document justifications.
   c. whether the factoring method was used to set the monthly amount. (See the factoring section for requirements and exceptions to the use of factoring.)

Annualizing Income Method

Annualizing income is used for contractual, self-employment ,or other income anticipated to cover a longer period of time. Divide an annual or contractual amount by the number of months the income is intended to cover.

NOTE: Do not use annualizing if significant income changes are expected in any months during the review period. Instead use the anticipating income method.

Enter a case note, stating the method used to determine income eligibility, and:

1. The type of income (e.g., contractual, self-employment, etc.);
3. The income amount used;
4. How the amount was determined (i.e. tax return, business logs, etc); and
5. The number of months the income is intended to cover.

EXAMPLE: Helen has a craft business that she operates out of her home. Her books indicate that she receives some income every month. She has no other source of income (earned or unearned). She indicates the income from this business is intended to support her year round.

Add all Helen's annual income from this business (minus allowable expenses) and divide it by 12 months to arrive at the countable monthly income.

Jan.	$ 300.00		July	$ 500.00
Feb.	$ 275.00		Aug.	$ 400.00
Mar.	$ 350.00		Sept.	$ 350.00
Apr.	$ 550.00		Oct.	$ 450.00
May	$ 600.00		Nov.	$ 950.00
June	$ 550.00		Dec.	$1,100.00
		Total:		$6,375.00

$6,375 divided by 12 = $531.25/month

Additional Examples

Averaging Semi-Monthly Income

Joe has been working for the same employer for two years. His hours fluctuate from week-to-week. According to Joe, he always works at least 20 hours and never more than 35 hours per week. Joe gets a paycheck on the 1st and the 15th of each month. He is paid $6.50 per hour. Joe is able to provide pay stubs for the last two months (February and March). He states that he expects the next three months (April, May, and June) will be very similar to the past two months in terms of the number of hours he will work.

Using the four pay stubs provided, average to arrive at an amount per pay period to use. Joe has agreed the paychecks are a best estimate for the prospective period.

Feb. 1st pay stub	49 hours	$ 318.50
Feb. 15th pay stub	42 hours	$ 273.00
Mar. 1st pay stub	47 hours	$ 305.50
Mar. 15th pay stub	55 hours	$ 357.50
	193 hours	$1254.50

$1254.50 divided by 4 equals $313.62 -- the average amount per pay period.

Multiply the average amount per pay period by the number of pay periods in a month to arrive at the average monthly income.

$313.62 X 2 = $627.24

13 Week Calculation

If significant changes were expected in the previous example, such as Joe receiving a raise to $6.75/hour and a change in hours, the anticipating method using the 13-week calculation would provide the best estimate.

EXAMPLE: Joe provides an employer statement indicating he will work an average of 27 hrs/wk and that his raise to $6.75 is effective March 16th. All hours on his April 1st check will be paid at the new hourly rate.

27 x $6.75 = $182.25 X 13 = $2,369.25 divided by 3 = $789.75.

Averaging
If the only expected change in the previous example were an increase in the hourly wage, the best estimate would be to multiply the average hours by the new rate of pay:
193 hrs divided by 2 mo. = 96.5 X $6.76 = $651.38

Note: Prospected income is less in the averaging example than in the 13-week calculation because averaged hours are less than the 27 used in the 13-week calculation.

Averaging and Factoring
In some situations a combination of methods is appropriate to arrive at the best estimate.

> NOTE: Ongoing income received weekly or bi-weekly (every two weeks) must be factored unless it meets the exception on page 8.

Sam has been working for the same employer for six months. He has fluctuating income and is paid every Friday. The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist and Sam have agreed to use the actual income amounts that were received for the six weeks prior to the scholarship application interview to determine his average weekly income:

Week 1:	$ 100
Week 2:	$ 150
Week 3:	$ 150
Week 4:	$ 200
Week 5:	$ 50
Week 6:	$ 200
Total:	$ 850

Average weekly income: $850 divided by 6 = $141.67
Factor the average weekly income $141.67 x 4.3 = $609.18

($609.18 is the average monthly income)

> NOTE: The $50.00 received the 5th week must be evaluated to

determine if the trend is expected to continue. The check could be disregarded as an unusually low check if it is not expected to happen again in the prospective period. A case note must clearly document the justification for either disregarding or including the check.

Income Not Counted

There will be instances when income is not counted prospectively.

EXAMPLE: A household has no earned income. The household timely reports on July 2nd, using a change report form, that on July 5th a household member will start a job and the first paycheck will be received on July 20th. The job will end on August 5th, and the last paycheck will be received on August 20th.

In this example, July's earned income will never be counted. The household reported the income correctly. July's income could not be reasonably prospected, and therefore was not considered. August Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship was determined based on prospecting August's income as a result of the information provided in the change report.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Non-TANF Child Care**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Income Table**

Supersedes: Child Care 2.6 (7/01/03)

References: ARM 37.80.201 – 202
52-2-701 - 704; 52-2-713 MCA
45 CFR 98.20

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Adoptive Support Services:	Excluded	No
Agent Orange Settlement Payments:	Excluded	No
Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Tax Exempt Payments:	Excluded	No
Alien Sponsor Deemed Income:	Excluded	No
AmeriCorps VISTA: The living allowance (stipend) received by participants in the AmeriCorps Program is counted as earned income.	Employment	Yes
Annuity Income: Cash received, and available earnings, from an annuity are countable. Dividends and interest available to individuals are countable, even though these earning may be reinvested.	Interest, Dividend, Royalty	Yes
Assistance Payment from Other State:	Cash Assistance	Yes
Bonus Income:	Tips or Bonuses	Yes
Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance Benefits:	Cash Assistance	Yes
Capital Gains from Sale of Personal Property: Capital gains income, resulting from the sale of real or personal property, such	Lump Sum	Yes

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
as a primary residence, is treated as a lump sum payment.		
Capital Investment Returns: Returns from capital investments are counted. If the individual is actively engaged in the management of the investment, this may be "Self-employment Income."	Interest, Dividend, Royalties	Yes
Cash Contributions: Cash contributions directly available to the applicant or participant, regardless of the intended use, are counted as unearned income. EXAMPLE: A non-family member gives the caretaker relative $150 cash to make her car payment. This is a cash contribution directly available to her. However, if the car payment is made directly to the vendor, it is not counted as available to the individual; the payment becomes a "third-party vendor payment."	Other Income	Yes
Child's Income (see Dependent Child's Earned Income)		
Child Support "In Excess" Payments:	Child Support	Yes
Child Support Arrearage Amount:	Child Support	Yes
Child Support: Child support income retained by the parent is counted. Prospect the net amount and disregard CSED fees withheld from child support payments. If child support income is irregular, average the income over a period. EXAMPLE: A family begins receiving child support, which comes very irregularly. One payment of $150 is received in January; another payment of $75 is received in July. Since the child support is very unpredictable, you are unable to prospect the income. However, if there is a history of a year or more, child support may be averaged and prospected.	Child Support	Yes
Child-Only TANF Cash Grant:	TANF Cash Assistance	Yes

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
College Work Study: Work-study hours count toward the minimum hourly work requirement. NOTE: CCR&Rs count the work hours and the income, while OPA may exclude this as educational income	Employment	Yes
Commissions, Salary or Wages:	Employment	Yes
Community Spouse Income Maintenance Allowance: (Not likely seen in child care families.)	Other Income	Yes
Contract for Deed: The income received, whether principal and/or interest, is counted as unearned income.	Other Income	Yes
Dependent Child's Earned Income – Attending School: The earned income of a dependent child who is attending elementary or high school, regardless of age, is excluded.	Excluded	No
Dependent Child's Earned Income – Not Attending School: A dependent child's income is counted, unless the child is attending school.	Employment	Yes
Disability Benefits:	Disability Benefits	Yes
Disabled Children of Female Vietnam Veterans: Veterans Administration payments to disabled children (now adults) of females who served in Vietnam between February 1961 and May 1975 are excluded.	Excluded	No
Disaster Relief Act: Payments issued because of a Presidential emergency declaration or major disaster, as amended, are excluded. This applies to government and disaster assistance organization payments to individuals.	Excluded	No
Dividend, Interest & Royalty Income: Personal interest, dividend, and royalty income are countable.	Interest, Dividend, Royalty	Yes

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Divorce Settlement: A divorce settlement is the division of a couple's assets or resources; it is not income. (However, ongoing child support or alimony payments are counted as income.)	---	No
Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC): The applicant or participant may receive the EITC with his/her regular wages. The EITC amount should be noted on the wage stubs. EITC may also be received with the individual's annual federal tax refund.	Excluded	No
Educational Income: Educational grants, loans, scholarships, and VA educational payments are not countable income. If the amount is received in a large sum, reduce the income to a monthly amount for the intended period on CCUBS. NOTE: See 'College Work Study' regarding the minimum hourly work requirement.	Educational Grant or Loan Assistance	No
Employer Paid Insurance or Child Care Benefits Employer contributions toward health or group life insurance, medical expenses, and child care expenses. This includes employer paid flexible benefits, which are not cashable to the employee. EXAMPLE: State Share Credit	Excluded	No
Family Saving for Tomorrow Program (Asset for Independence Act): Family Saving for Tomorrow Program payments are made to a vendor on behalf of the participant. Participants agree to chose set a specific savings goal, either a down payment on a house, start-up costs of a business, or tuition for post-secondary education. The family makes monthly savings deposits, from earned income, for up to three years and receives a two-to-one match on their savings. The match is not counted as income in determining child care scholarship eligibility.	Excluded	No
Farm Income:	Self-Employment	Yes

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Farm Loss: A farm loss may not reduce income from other sources, so the amount must be zero.	Self-Employment	No
Federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Retraining Funds: TAA supplements Unemployment Insurance benefits to retrain participants and move them back into the workforce. The participant's job skills are evaluated. Retraining benefits are paid directly to a school for a participant's tuition and books. Benefits are also available to cover the participant's rent and utilities, if the participant must maintain a second residence while attending school. While away from the main household, the participant may receive subsistence per diem, based on CONUS rates. NOTE: Unemployment compensation is separate and countable income.	Educational Grant or Loan Assistance	No
Federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Supportive Services: TAA supplements Unemployment Insurance benefits to retrain participants and move them back into the workforce. Job Search Funding: Travel expenses are reimbursed based on receipts, for the participant to interview for a new position. Reimbursement is limited to $1,250 per participant. Relocation Funding: Moving expenses, up to $1,250, are reimbursed for the participant, and their family, who relocates to take a new job or attend school. Relocation Benefit: A $1,250 benefit is available to assist in establishing the family after relocating. TAA Supplemental Discretionary Grant: A TAA participant may apply, based on financial need, for emergency assistance. The emergency assistance must be for, or directly related to the participant, not the participant's family members. Examples include the following: ❑ Rent (emergency)	Excluded	No

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
❑ Vehicle Repair ❑ Medical Need ❑ House Repair ❑ Child Care (e.g. training for the participant) NOTE: Offer a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, if possible. Child care benefits should be coordinated to ensure correct payment. NOTE: Unemployment compensation is separate and countable income.		
Flexible Benefits – Employee Option: Flexible benefits, which are voluntarily withheld for a paycheck, are countable wages. The employee exercises the option of contributing to a flex plan or taking the wages in cash.	Employment	Yes
Food Stamp Benefits: The CCDF requires states to report Food Stamp participation on the ACF-801. Record the amount of the food stamp allotment. The amount is not counted as income for eligibility purposes. ⇒ Verify Food Stamp Benefits on the TEAMS TAFS/TAF3 screen 'AMT' column.	Food Stamps	No
Foster Care Income and Supportive Services: Payments that are specified in the appropriate foster care plan. TEAMS income code 'FC CI' (child in) or 'FC CO' (child out)	Excluded	No
Garnishment: A garnishment is not subtracted from the individual's gross income. Use the income code that corresponds to the source of the garnished income. EXAMPLE: Garnishment amounts from unemployment benefits are coded "Unemployment Compensation." EXAMPLE: A child support garnishment of a paycheck is coded "Employment" income.	See Examples	Yes

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Non-TANF Child Care

Subject:
Income Table

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
GI Bill (or Veterans' Administration Education Payments) : are excluded, provided the participant is attending an institution of higher education/training.	Educational Grant or Loan Assistance	No
Gifts - $50/Individual or Less: Small cash gifts, up to $50 per gift per individual, may be excluded. A gift presented to the entire assistance unit is considered as equally divided among the members.	Excluded	No
Gifts - Over $50/Individual: Large Gifts over $50 per individual shall be considered contributions.	Other Income	Yes
Government Pension:	Pension or Retirement	Yes
Housing Voucher or Cash: CCDF requires states to report housing subsidy participation on the ACF-801. The amount is not included as income for eligibility purposes. (Do not enter student housing.) NOTE: It is not necessary to verify the client's statement regarding housing participation. NOTE: While Montana does not count housing benefits when determining eligibility, the federal ACF-801 report asks about housing participation. If the family receives housing benefits, enter one dollar ($1) in CCUBS as 'Housing' to identify the family's participation. This will cause the ACF-801 to report this benefit in a Yes/No format, while not counting the income for eligibility purposes.	Housing Voucher	No ($1)
HUD Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program Escrow Account Interest:	Excluded	No
Incentive Payments: designed to encourage participation in Public Assistance Programs:	Excluded	No
Indian (Native American) Countable Income: Countable income includes, but is not limited to the following: ❑. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) income	Other Income	Yes

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
❑ Farm and grazing lease income ❑ Interest income ❑ Mineral rights income ❑ Oil and gas royalties income ❑ Transfers of countable monies from other Indian agencies		
Indian (Native American) Excluded Income: Exclude the following income: ❑ Income derived from sub marginal lands ❑ Interest earned on excluded funds ❑ Judgment claim income ❑ Per capita payment income, from funds held in trust distributed to enrolled members (a.k.a. BIA check) ❑ Up to $2,000 per year of income received by individual Indians which are derived from leases or other uses of individually-owned trust or restricted lands	Excluded	No
In-Kind Income – Earned or Obligated for Housing or Food: The value of earned, or obligated, in-kind income is the current value of the service provided. An earned, or obligated, third party vendor payment is counted as in-kind income if: ❑ The value of the payment is earned and contributes housing or food to the employee, or; ❑ The value of the payment is legally obligated to the family. And; ❑ A third party pays a vendor, benefiting the family. ❑ Cash is not available to the family. This does not include employer paid benefits unrelated to housing or food, such as health insurance premiums or child care benefits. EXAMPLE: An individual receives housing in exchange for general maintenance services. The earned in-kind earnings are valued at the amount of the rent. EXAMPLE: An employer pays the rent as an employment benefit. The value of the rent is countable in-kind income. EXAMPLE: Money legally obligated to the household, but diverted to a third party to pay a household expense.	In-Kind (Earned/ Obligated)	Yes

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Non-TANF Child Care

Subject:
Income Table

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
In-Kind Income - Unearned: A third party payment made as gift to the family may be excluded: ❑ The value of the payment is not legally obligated to the family, or; ❑ The benefit is not tied to the employee's earnings, such as the value of uniforms, group health insurance, or child care benefits available to all persons employed. And: ❑ A third party pays a vendor, benefiting the family. ❑ Cash is not available to the family. EXAMPLE: The participant's father pays $100 of the participant's rent directly to the proprietor.	Excluded	No
Insurance Settlement: Proceeds of Fire or Casualty Insurance Claim used to recoup for the loss or casualty within three months of receipt. The insurance money must be signed over to the person or company who will do the repairs or otherwise disposed of within this period.	Excluded	No
Interest, Dividend or Royalty Income: Personal interest, dividend, and royalty income are countable.	Interest, Dividend, Royalty	Yes
Internship: ➢ The hours required to complete an internship may count toward the minimum hourly work requirement if the internship is required for graduation.	Employment	Yes
Irregular or Infrequent Income:	Other Income	Yes
Jury Duty: The income received, less per diem allowance, is counted. EXCEPTION: If the individual provides verification that the payment was given to his/her employer, "Exclude" the income.	Employment	Yes
Lease Income:	Rental or Lease Income	Yes

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Non-TANF Child Care

Subject:
Income Table

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Life Insurance – Annuity Income, or Payments Over Time: Cash received, and available earnings, from an annuity are countable. NOTE: Dividends and interest available to individuals are also countable, even though these earning may be reinvested. NOTE: See Life Insurance – Lump Sum Payment	Other Income	Yes
Life Insurance – Lump Sum Payment: If prospected, a life insurance payment is countable in the month received. NOTE: See Life Insurance – Annuity Income, or Regular Payments	Lump Sum	Yes
Loans: A valid loan is a loan for which the lender must deliver a sum of money to a borrower. The borrower must express or imply, either orally or in writing, an obligation to repay. The obligation to repay must be absolute and not contingent on the occurrence of an uncertain event. EXCEPTION: Educational loans are identified as "Educational Grant or Loan Assistance."	Excluded	No
Low Income Energy Assistance Payment (LIEAP) Income:	Excluded	No
Legally Unregistered In-Home Provider (LUI)/ Legally Unregistered Provider (LUP) ➢	Self-Employment	Yes
Lump Sum Payment: Non-recurring lump sum payments are counted. The income must be prospected when determining eligibility. Examples include the following: ❑ Capital gains ❑ Crop insurance proceeds ❑ Rebate or credit refunds ❑ Settlements from Social Security, TANF Cash, Tribal TANF, railroad retirement or insurance claims ❑ Severance pay or sick leave payout	Lump Sum	Yes
Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980:	Excluded	No

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Non-TANF Child Care

Subject:
Income Table

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Military Allotment: A military allotment is not subtracted from the service member's gross income. An allotment is used to send money back to the family or pay a third party. EXAMPLE: Child support might be paid through a military allotment.	Employment	Yes
Military Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH): A stipend paid to military personnel, whether cash or payments in-kind. Employer paid housing and food benefits are countable.	In-Kind (Earned/ Obligated)	Yes
Military Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS): A stipend paid to military personnel, whether cash or payments in-kind. Employer paid housing and food benefits are countable.	In-Kind (Earned/ Obligated)	Yes
Non-Cash Employee Compensation - Food or Shelter: Earned employee compensation benefit, which is either food or shelter, counts as earned in-kind income.	In-Kind (Earned/ Obligated)	Yes
Non-Cash Employee Compensation – Other than Food or Shelter: Employer compensation benefits that are not available in the form of cash, food or shelter, are not included as income. If the employee may take any of these benefits as cash, the benefits are countable. The following examples may not be countable income: ❑ Child care benefits paid by the employer ❑ Flexible spending benefits paid by the employer ❑ Insurance premiums (medical, life, disability) paid by the employer ❑ Vehicles, used for employment purposes.	Excluded	No
Nutrition Program for the Elderly: Any benefits received under Title VII, Nutrition Program for the Elderly, of the Older Americans Act of 1965 are not counted.	Excluded	No
Pension Annuity Payments:	Pension or Retirement	Yes

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Non-TANF Child Care

Subject:
Income Table

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Personal Injury Settlement Payments: This income is evaluated as a possible lump-sum payment. If the income does not meet lump sum policy, only the amount actually released and received by the participant is counted as "Disability Benefits."	Lump Sum	Yes
Radiation Exposure Compensation Income:	Excluded	No
Railroad Retirement:	Pension or Retirement	Yes
Refugee's Sponsor's Income:	Excluded	No
Reimbursements:	Excluded	No
Relocation Payments: Payments, received under Title II of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, are not counted.	Excluded	No
Rental Income:	Rental or Lease Income	Yes
Retirement Income:	Pension or Retirement	Yes
Royalty, Dividends or Interest Income: Personal interest, dividend, and royalty income are countable.	Interest, Dividend, Royalty	Yes
Salary, Wages or Commissions:	Employment	Yes
Sale of Blood: Income from the sale of whole blood or blood plasma is considered self-employment income.	Self-Employment	Yes
Scholarship: See educational income.	Educational Grant or Loan	No

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
	Assistance	
Section 8/HUD Utilities Payments . . . regardless of the payee.	Excluded	No
Self-Employment Income:	Self-Employment	Yes
Severance Pay: Severance pay represents a non-recurring compensation outside of regular earnings. It is treated as lump sum earned income.	Lump Sum	Yes
Shelter Workshop/Rehabilitation Center Income: Handicapped individuals often work in sheltered workshops or rehabilitation centers performing services/work for therapeutic or rehabilitative purposes. These earnings are totally excluded. Although their wages are subject to taxes, etc., IRS rules treat them as non-employees. (Revenue ruling 65-165.)	Excluded	No
Social Security Benefits (SS): Social Security benefits are paid to an individual, to the family of an individual, based on the individual's earnings. They may be in the form of retirement benefits or survivor's benefits.	Other Federal Cash Income Program	Yes
Social Security Disability Income (SSDI): SSDI benefits are paid to a disabled individual or a disabled individual's family. The payments are based on the disabled individual's past earnings.	Other Federal Cash Income Programs	Yes
Striker Income: Income from union strike activity is countable income.	Other Income	Yes
Student Housing: Student housing is not considered Federal Housing Voucher or Cash' assistance for federal reporting purposes. NOTE: By policy, all income is entered, whether countable in determining eligibility. However, there is no need to enter student-housing benefits as income in CCUBS.	N/A	No

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Supplemental Food Assistance: received under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the National School Lunch Act.	Excluded	No
Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Eligibility workers may use the following guidance to identify supplemental security income: SSI payments are made to individuals unable to earn income due to a disability or other qualifying cause. SSI benefits are not based on past earnings and are limited in amount. ⇒ Verify the client's statement regarding SSI participation, since this may be confused with SS or SSDI. EXCEPTION: If the SSI recipient clearly uses the monetary resource to provide income to another household member, then the other household member would include the respective contribution (Other Income).	Supplemental Security Income	No
Supportive Services which are specified in a public assistance program.	Excluded	No
TANF Bridge-the-Gap Benefit (Work Support Payment): TANF Cash benefit to support the family leaving the TANF program and going to work.	TANF Cash Assistance	No
TANF Cash Benefits: Enter the TANF Cash benefit for each individual.	TANF Cash Assistance	Yes
TANF Cash Recoupment Amount (Fraud): Do not reduce TANF Cash benefits by any recoupment amount.	Excluded	No
TANF Cash Supplement – FS Countable:	Excluded	No
TANF Cash Underpayment – Exempt:	Excluded	No
Tax Refund: ➢	Excluded	No

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Non-TANF Child Care

Subject:
Income Table

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Tips: Tips coincide with employment hours. NOTE: If an individual works only for tips, they are self-employed.	Tips or Bonuses	Yes
Training Allowance – Not a Reimbursement: EXAMPLE: An employer pays a training stipend, as set amount. This may occur before employment or during employment.	Tips or Bonuses	Yes
Training Related Reimbursement: EXAMPLE: An employer pays for a current employee's training expenses.	Excluded	No
Tribal TANF:	Tribal TANF	Yes
Trust Fund Income: Cash received, and available earnings, from a trust fund are countable. Dividends and interest available to individuals are countable, even though these earnings may be reinvested.	Interest, Dividend, Royalty	Yes
Unemployment Insurance Compensation: ❑ Unemployment Insurance (UI) [State – 26 weeks]. ❑ Federal Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) [Federal Trade Adjustment Assistance - 26 weeks]. ❑ Extended Federal TRA. [Federal Trade Adjustment Assistance - 26 weeks].	Unemployment Compensation	Yes
Vendor Payment - Earned or Obligated: See In-Kind Income – Earned or Obligated.	Employment	Yes
Vendor Payment - Unearned: See In-Kind Income – Unearned.	Excluded	No
Veterans' Administration Education Payments (or GI Bill):. are excluded, provided the participant is attending an institution of higher education/training.	Educational Grant or Loan Assistance	No

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Non-TANF Child Care

Subject:
Income Table

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Veterans' Pensions and Benefits:	Pension or Retirement	Yes
Victims Compensation Program: Payments to victims of crime for medical/therapy costs incurred as the result of criminal acts, paid after all other insurance, etc. fulfills their obligations.	Excluded	No
Vietnam Veterans, Disabled Children of Female Vietnam Veterans See "Disabled Children of Female Vietnam Veterans"	Excluded	No
VISTA Income:	Employment	Yes
Vocational Rehabilitation Income:	Excluded	No
Wages, Salary or Commission:	Employment	Yes
Weatherization: One-time payments for weatherization and replacement or repair of heating or cooling devices are excluded.	Excluded	No
Women, Infant's & Children (WIC):	Excluded	No
Workers' Compensation Benefits:	Worker Compensation	Yes
Workforce Investment Act (WIA) as Educational Income: If the parent does not need the WIA hours to meet the minimum hourly work requirement, the income may be coded as "Educational Grant or Loan Assistance:" Also, see "Workforce Investment Act (WIA) as Work."	Educational Grant or Loan Assistance	No
Workforce Investment Act (WIA) as Work: When the participant needs work hours to meet the minimum hourly work requirement, code WIA income as "Employment." On-the-job training may be long term (6+ months) or short term WIA/WEX training. Participants receive a paycheck from their employer, or from a WoRC contractor. There may be no indication the employee is a WIA participant. WIA replaces the JTPA program. Also, see "Workforce Investment Act (WIA) as Educational Income."	Employment	Yes

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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May 7, 2007

TO: Child Care Manual Holders

FROM: Anne Carpenter
DPHHS ECSB

SUBJECT: Bulletin #3 - Child Care Manual
Place this bulletin at the beginning of section 3-1 in the Child Care Manual. This supercedes Section 3-1 p. 3 of 11.

Section: Child Care Manual Section 3-1
Subject: OPA, WoRC & CCR&R Coordination
Effective Date: May 1, 2007

WoRC Refers Family to CCR&R (p. 3 of 10)

The WoRC Case Manager will refer a family to the Child Care Resource and Referral agency before TANF Cash Assistance benefits are authorized. The need for child care usually begins when the TANF Cash Assistance eligibility process begins and TANF benefits are pending authorization. The CCR&R will authorize child care for 30 days until TANF Cash Assistance has been authorized. The TANF family will not incur an overpayment if benefits are denied during this 30 day period.

In the first 30 days of the TANF participant's application process and TANF Cash benefits can not be verified on TEAMS, the CCR&R worker must: (p. 2 of 10)

- ⇒ Enter $1 for TANF Cash benefits on the CCUBS Person screen;
- ⇒ Enter $1 for Food Stamp benefits; and
- ⇒ Enter $1 for housing or rent benefits.
- ⇒ Once TANF benefits are authorized, the CCR&R eligibility specialist must update the Person screen with the available information using the TEAMS interface.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Child Care for TANF Participants**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **OPA, WoRC & CCR&R Coordination**

Supercedes: **Child Care 3-1 (05/1/05)**

References: **52-2-701 – 704 & 52-2-711 – 713 MCA**
Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305-306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM
45 CFR Part 98.20 – 47

General Rule

Parents participating in the TANF Cash Assistance program administered by the State of Montana contact their WoRC Case Manager to arrange for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship for Family Investment Agreement (FIA)/ WoRC Employability Plan (EP) activities that require child care. The WoRC Case Manager makes an electronic referral to the Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) agency (DPHHS – CC-051) and the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship application (DPHHS-CC-010) will be available to TANF parents in each local WoRC office. Child Care assistance will not start until an electronic referral form is received at the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency.

The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may begin on the date the CCR&R receives the electronic referral form. The parent then has 30 days from the date of the WoRC referral to submit a completed Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship application to the CCR&R.

The CCR&R issues the Child Care Certification Plan based on the FIA/EP activities that require child care. When the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship begins, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist mails a copy of the Child Care Certification Plan to the WoRC Case Manager.

Application & CCUBS Processing

A family participating in the TANF cash program completes the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship application. The TEAMS interface may be used to verify TANF participation, activity hours, and income for each family member. The application notifies the family of their rights and responsibilities.

The application must be completed and submitted to the CCR&R within 30 days of the child care referral by the WoRC Case Manager or the case will be closed.

It is important that all income and activity information is entered in CCUBS because the following processes are dependant on the information:

- ❑ The family may choose to be eligible if there is a Non-TANF waiting list.
- ❑ Data is used for federal reporting purposes.
- ❑ Data is used in aggregate form to profile the population served by the program.

The CCR&R worker must:

- ⇒ Verify TANF Cash benefits on the CCUBS 'TEAMS Person Information' interface and/or on the TEAMS TAFS/TAF2 screens 'AMT' column.
- ⇒ Verify Food Stamp benefits on the TEAMS TAFS/TAF3 screen 'AMT' column.
- ⇒ Verify housing or rent benefits. If a family does not have verification of the housing benefit amount, enter $1 under "Housing Voucher."

Qualifying Families & Children Participating in TANF Cash

Parents who need child care to perform Family Investment Activities/ Employability Plan (FIA)/ (EP) activities are eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. Children are not required to be part of the TANF Cash assistance unit.

EXAMPLE: A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be provided for a child, who has returned to the caretaker relative's home for the school summer months. They may not be part of the TANF Cash assistance unit because they will be returning to the custodial caretaker relative before the start of the new school year.

EXAMPLE: A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be

provided for a minor child receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Title IV-E Foster Care, or not included in the TANF Cash assistance unit for failing an eligibility requirement.

Additionally, a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be provided for a teen parent, living with a specified caretaker relative, if needed for secondary school attendance hours.

EXAMPLE: A teen parent lives with her father and attends high school. Because she is attending high school, she is not required to have a FIA/EP. However, she is eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship during her school hours.

Parents and children are subject to general eligibility requirements, as outlined in Child Eligibility in Section 1-6 and Parent Eligibility in Section 1-7.

Child Only Grant

Children who receive a child-only TANF Cash grant may participate in a Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. The parent must apply and be eligible for a Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

Qualified Child Care Provider

Families receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship must use either a licensed, registered or legally unregistered provider (LUP) approved for payment purposes, as outlined in Provider Eligibility in Section 1-8.

WoRC Refers Family to CCR&R

The WoRC Case Manager will not refer a family to the Child Care Resource and Referral agency before TANF Cash Assistance benefits are authorized. The need for child care usually begins when the TANF Cash Assistance eligibility process is complete and TANF benefits are authorized.

A family may need assistance in finding a child care provider. In these situations, the WoRC Case Manager may request the family to contact the CCR&R to receive a listing of possible child care providers.

If a child care scholarship is recommended, the WoRC Case Manager refers the family using an electronic referral form (DPHHS – CC-051) to the CCR&R:

- The referral for child care is e-mailed to the CCR&R.
- The CCR&R must print a copy for file.
- The WoRC Case Manager may assist the family by mailing the completed Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship application to the CCR&R within 30 days of the referral.

Coordinate services:

- The WoRC Case Manager interviews the family and determines the amount of child care needed and the child care schedule:
- The WoRC Case Manager reviews the weekly FIA/EP activities to corroborate the need for child care.
- When a need for child care has been determined, the WoRC Case Manager shall e-mail the referral form (DPHHS – CC-051) to the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist to complete FIA/EP activities.

  NOTE: CCUBS does not receive any alerts from TEAMS until the WoRC Case Manager contacts the CCR&R and the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist registers the TEAMS Person ID numbers in CCUBS.
- If a sanction is upheld and the case goes to closure, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist will receive an alert in CCUBS.
- TANF parents may be responsible for the cost of child care that is used for activities not related to their FIA/EP. If child care is used for activities not related to the family's FIA/EP schedule, the family may have an overpayment. The CCR&R will process the overpayment.

⇒ The CCR&R enters the case into CCUBS upon receiving a referral from the WoRC Case Manager.

⇒ The CCR&R uses the TEAMS Person ID# on the CCUBS 'TEAMS Person Information' interface to gather basic demographic information, such as their Social Security number.

⇒ The CCR&R uses the Head of Household's address for the Mailing Address of the family in CCUBS.

NOTE: In the event of a case closure notice or any notice in which an adverse action is being taken, the CCR&R worker will need to send the notice to both the WoRC Case Manager's agency office and to the family's home address.

⇒ If the family decides to use a legally unregistered provider, rhe CCR&R processes the LUP application.
⇒ The CCR&R issues a child care certification plan for an initial referral for 60 days plus the remaining days in that month using a 30 hour varied schedule plus time for travel. The referral will indicate the total amount of time that child care is needed.

EXAMPLE: The family is referred on the 15th of January. The CCR&R approves the certification period until March 31st.

⇒ After the initial referral, certification plans should be issued according to a daily schedule and for a 3-month period. WoRC Case Managers may authorize exceptions to a daily schedule requirement.
⇒ The WoRC Case Manager may request the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist to adjust the child care certification plan when the need for child care changes.
⇒ The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist will close the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship if the family no longer needs child care to perform FIA/EP activities, the family has not paid their co-payment, or their TANF closes.

CCR&R Notifies WoRC Case Manager

When the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship begins, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist mails a copy of the Child Care Certification Plan to the WoRC Case Manager.

Re-certifying Child Care for TANF Participants

A re-certification reminder is mailed to the family six weeks before their child care certification plan expires.

NOTE: If the certification plan is less than six weeks, CCUBS may not automatically generate a re-certification reminder. The CCR&R is responsible for generating appropriate notices for the parent and the provider.

WoRC Case Manager Notifies CCR&R

For a family transitioning from TANF to Non-TANF child care assistance, the WoRC Case Manager shall notify the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist if the family is eligible for the Fill-the-Gap child care policy, as outlined in Section 6-6.

Family Loses Eligibility

Families may lose eligibility during a child care certification plan. Evaluate the circumstances in an effort to offer continuity of care for the child and family, as outlined in Continuity of Care in Section 6-6. The family loses Best Beginning Child Care Scholarship eligibility if:

- They lose eligibility for TANF;
- They fail to pay the required co-payment fees within the month due;
- There is no qualifying child in the home; or
- The parent has been sanctioned and there is no longer a need for child care during FIA/EP activities.

Loss of TANF Cash Eligibility

The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist will receive a closure alert from TEAMS and will:

⇒ End-date the certification plan concurrent with the end of the TANF Cash benefit month, or before, if warranted.

⇒ Evaluate eligibility for Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

⇒ Notify the parent and provider if child care will end before the certification plan expires.

⇒ Case note the closure reason.

⇒ Case note the assessment leading to the closure, when the family no longer needs care to continue FIA activities.

Sanctions

If a parent is sanctioned, a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be offered if the participant is complying with portions of the FIA/EP agreement.

- Child care assistance may still be available in two situations:
  - Partial FIA/EP compliance - if the parent and WoRC Case Manager agree to continue some FIA/EP activities.
  - A need is established when one parent is participating in TANF Cash and the other parent is disqualified. The WoRC Case Manager will determine if there is a need for child care.

After the sanction period has been served, the family has the option to leave the TANF Cash Assistance program and apply for a Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

TANF Work Support Payment

When a family's TANF is closed due to earned income, they may receive a TANF Work Support payment. The TANF Work Support payment is money to help the participant bridge the gap between the closure of TANF Cash Assistance and the receipt of employment income into the household.

The TANF Cash Assistance Program does not consider the family to be categorized as TANF during this month and the month does not count towards the family's 60-month time clock for receiving TANF Cash Assistance. The ECSB does consider the TANF Work Support payment to be TANF assistance and therefore the CCR&R should continue to keep the family categorized as TANF until the end of the month in which the Work Support payment was received.

Dependent Care Disregard

OPA Eligibility Case Managers determine TANF eligibility. A dependent care disregard for out-of-pocket dependent care expenses is used when determining income available to TANF participants. The portion of the family's income used to pay for dependent care, up to $200 per individual per month, is excluded from the family's income when determining TANF eligibility.

Co-payment Requirement

Each family receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is required to contribute toward the cost of the child care scholarship based on the family's ability to pay. The co-payment is based on a sliding fee scale. Families eligible for TANF Cash benefits have a $10 monthly co-payment.

TANF Families Require Affordable, Appropriate, Suitable Care Within a Reasonable Distance

CCR&Rs, in conjunction with the WoRC Case Manager, shall inform the families participating in the TANF Cash Assistance program that they are exempt from penalties for non-participation in required activities if they need child care and cannot find child care for children under age six that is appropriate, affordable, suitable, and within a reasonable distance. These terms are defined as follows:

Affordable Child Care means the total parental (caretaker relative or person acting in loco parentis) co-payment and 'above and beyond' obligation does not exceed 25% of gross family income.

Appropriate Child Care means the child care provider must meet applicable state licensing/registration standards.

Reasonable Distance means:

a. If the family is without either their own (or arranged) transportation, and there is no public transportation, then their home or work site must be no more than 1 mile from the child care provider.

b. If the family has their own (or arranged) transportation, their home or work site is within one-hour travel distance, one-way, from the child care provider.

Unsuitable Informal Care means care, which does not meet applicable state licensing standards even though it may be the parent's choice.

Serving the Family

Families may lose eligibility for a brief period during a transition. Policies are available to maintain continuity of care for the child and maintain an

established relationship with the child's provider, as outlined in Section 6 of this manual. Additional Best Beginning Child Care Scholarship management issues are addressed in the same section.

Family Transitioning from TANF to Non-TANF Child Care Assistance

When TANF is closed, the family must apply for Non-TANF Child Care assistance at the local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency. The CCR&R will interview the family to determine if the Fill-the-Gap policy should be applied to insure the continuity of care for the children.

⇒ The CCR&R will notify the family and child care provider at least ten days in advance of closing the TANF child care case.
⇒ The CCR&R distributes a Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship application to the family.
⇒ If applicable, the CCR&R may determine the family is eligible for Fill-the-Gap.

Reading the EMPL Information

➢ The following table summarizes Family Investment Activity/ Employability Plan FIA/ EP codes used on the TEAMS EMPL screen.

Note: Several FIA/EP activities do not require child care and some activities do not require child care for the total time allotted to the activity.

TEAMS FIA/EP CODE	FIA DESCRIPTION	Req'd FIA/EP?	Need Child Care?
ABE	ADULT BASIC ED.	N	Yes, for scheduled class time, out of the home.
CSP	COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS	N	Limited Usage
EBI	EXTENDED BENEFITS INCAPACITY	N	May require child care
EMP	EMPLOYMENT	N	Yes, based on interview.
FHP	FAIR HEARING PENDING	N	No
HNA	HRS NOT ACCOUNTD FR	N	No
HNC	HOURS NOT COMPLETED	N	No
HSE	HIGH SCHOOL ED.	N	Yes, for school hours
JBS	JOB SEARCH	N	Yes, based on interview.
JST	JOB SKILLS TRAINING	N	Yes, based on interview
MAE	ACCEPT & MAINT EMPL	Y	No
NCC	NO LONG-TERM CHILD CARE AVAILABLE	N	No
NEW	TRIBAL NEW	N	Yes, based on interview
	the WRC code, total hours are listed for the Tribal New referral. Unlike the WoRC program, TEAMS does not carry detailed information regarding Tribal New activities or components. Base the child care certification plan on the participant interview.		
NIH	NEEDED IN HOME TO CARE FOR DISABLED CHILD OR FAMILY MEMBER	N	No
NPI	NOT PARTICIPATING DUE TO INCAPACITY	N	May require child care, (ie. someone who has a medical emergency).
STT	SHORT TERM TRAINING	N	Yes, for scheduled class time, out of the home.
WEX	WORK EXPERIENCE	N	Yes, based on interview.
WRC	WORC COMPONENT	N	Yes, based on interview.
	WRC code generates the EMPL screen. WoRC components are coded the same as the FIA components.		

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Child Care for TANF Participants**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Tribal TANF**

Supercedes: **New Section**

References: **52-2-701 – 704 & 52-2-711 – 713 MCA**
Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305-306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM
45 CFR Part 98.20 – 47

General Rule

Tribal TANF families are dually eligible for Tribal Block Grant child care and State CCDF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. CCR&Rs must verify that the family is not receiving Tribal Block Grant child care before determining eligibility for State CCDF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. DPHHS currently contracts with each Child Care Resource & Referral agency to determine eligibility for families receiving TANF.

If the Tribal TANF program exhausts child care funding or if Tribal Block Grant families find they are covered for additional activities under State CCDF child care rules, families may apply for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

Application & CCUBS Processing

A family participating in the Tribal TANF cash program completes the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship application. During the application process the family is notified of their rights and responsibilities. Each CCR&R must work with their local Tribal TANF programs, to determine how much child care assistance is required to complete Tribal Activity Plan (TAP) activities.

All income and activity information is entered in CCUBS for the following purposes:

- ❑ The family may wish to be eligible for the Non-TANF waiting list
- ❑ Data is used for federal reporting purposes
- ❑ Data is used in aggregate form to profile the population served by the program.

Qualifying Families & Children Participating in Tribal TANF

Parents who need child care to perform Tribal Activity Plans (TAP) activities are eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. Children are not required to be part of the TANF Cash assistance unit.

Parents and children are subject to non-tribal Best Beginnings Scholarship eligibility requirements, as outlined in Child Eligibility Section 1-6 and Parent Eligibility in Section 1-7.

Qualified Child Care Provider

Families receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship must use either a licensed, registered or legally unregistered provider (LUP) approved for payment purposes. See Section 1-8 in this manual.

If the tribe runs their own child care licensing program and the state has an agreement to recognize that program, the Department would pay for care in that program.

CCR&R Manages Child Care

The Child Care Resource & Referral Agency (CCR&R) will manage the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship for the family. The family must contact the CCR&R to approve the child care scholarship.

- ⇒ The CCR&R will enter the case into CCUBS upon receiving an application from the Tribal TANF family.
- ⇒ The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist interviews the family and determines the amount of child care needed and the child care schedule.
- ⇒ If the family decides to use a legally unregistered provider, the CCR&R will process the LUP application, as outlined in Section 6-2.
- ⇒ The CCR&R will issue a child care certification plan corresponding to the family's TAP renewal date.
- ⇒ The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist may adjust the child care certification plan as needed to match TAP activities.
- ⇒ The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist will close the Best

Beginnings Child Care Scholarship if the family no longer needs child care to perform TAP activities, fails to pay their copayment or is no longer receiving Tribal TANF assistance.

A family may need assistance in finding a child care provider. In these situations, the family must contact the CCR&R to receive a listing of possible child care providers.

Coordinate services:

- The Tribal TANF Case Manager shall mail a referral form (DPHHS – CC-051) to the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist when a need for child care has been determined to complete TAP activities.
- If the TAP is renegotiated early, the Tribal TANF Case Manager shall notify the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist.
- If a sanction is being investigated, the Tribal TANF Case Manager shall notify the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist.
- If a sanction is upheld, the Tribal TANF Case Manager shall notify the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist.
- The Tribal TANF Case Manager, in conjunction with the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist, will inform the Tribal TANF parent that they may be responsible for the cost of child care which is used for activities not related to their TAP. If child care is used for activities not related to the family's TAP schedule, the Tribal TANF Case Manager will notify the CCR&R of the situation, which may result in an overpayment to the parent. The CCR&R will process the overpayment and notify the Tribal TANF Case Manager.

Re-certifying Child Care for TANF Participants

A re-certification reminder is mailed to families six (6) weeks before their child care certification plan expires.

NOTE: If the certification plan is less than six (6) weeks, CCUBS may not automatically generate a re-certification reminder. The CCR&R is responsible for generating appropriate notices for the parent and the provider.

- The family shall notify the CCR&R of any schedule changes occurring under the TAP, that affect the need for child care.

Loss of Eligibility

The family loses Best Beginning Child Care Scholarship eligibility if:

- They lose eligibility for Tribal TANF,
- They fail to pay the required co-payment fees within the month due,
- There is no qualifying child in the home, or
- The parent has been sanctioned and there is no longer a need for child care during TAP activities.

Sanctions

If a parent is sanctioned, a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be offered if the participant is complying with portions of the TAP agreement.

- Child care assistance may still be available in two situations:
  - Partial TAP compliance - if the parent and Tribal TANF Case Manager agree to continue some TAP activities.
  - A need is established when one parent is participating in Tribal TANF Cash and the other parent is disqualified. The Tribal TANF Case Manager will determine if there is a need for child care and communicate with the CCR&R.

The family has the option to give up Tribal TANF Cash benefits and apply for a Non-TANF Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

Co-payment Requirement

Each family receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is required to contribute toward the cost of the child care scholarship based on the family's ability to pay. The co-payment is based on a sliding fee scale. Families eligible for Tribal TANF Cash benefits have a $10 monthly co-payment.

TANF Families Require Affordable, Appropriate, Suitable Care Within a Reasonable Distance

CCR&Rs in conjunction with the Tribal TANF Case Manager shall inform the families participating in the Tribal TANF Cash program that they are exempt from penalties for non-participation in required activities if they need child care and cannot find child care for children under age six that is appropriate, affordable, suitable, and within a reasonable distance. These terms are defined as follows:

Affordable Child Care means the total parental (caretaker relative or person

acting in loco parentis) co-payment and 'above and beyond' obligation does not exceed 25% of gross family income.

Appropriate Child Care means the child care provider must meet applicable state licensing/registration standards.

Reasonable Distance means:

a. If the family is without either their own (or arranged) transportation, and there is no public transportation, their home or work site must be no more than 3 miles from the child care provider.

b. If the family has their own (or arranged) transportation, their home or work site is within one-hour travel distance, one-way, from the child care provider.

Unsuitable Informal Care means care, which does not meet applicable state licensing standards even though it may be the parent's choice.

Serving the Family

Families may lose eligibility for a brief period during a transition. Policies are available to maintain continuity of care for the child and maintain an established relationship with the child's provider. Refer to Section 6 'Serving the Family', in this manual, for details. Additional Best Beginning Child Care Scholarship management issues are addressed in the same section.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Child Protective Services Child Care Under The Best Beginnings Scholarship Program**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **CFSD & CCR&R Coordination**

Supercedes: **Child Care 4-1 (7/01/03)**

References: **Sections 37.80.101, 37.80.202, 37.80.203, 37.80.205, 37.80.206, 37.80.301, 37.80.501 ARM**
45 CFR Part 98

General Rule

To qualify for Child Protective Services (CPS) child care, the child must need care because of the danger of neglect or abuse. The physical or emotional risk to the child needs to be documented in the case record. Some families may be required to pay for child care services, as determined on a case-by-case basis.

Age Requirement

A child is eligible for a CPS Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship through age 18. When approving a child older than age 12:

⇒ Select "Court Supervised 13-18 Yr-Old (CPS)" on the child's 'Person' screen/'Special Needs' tab, as appropriate.

Child Care Providers

Child care providers must either be licensed or registered in order to care for CPS children. An exception may be granted by the Regional Administrator to allow a Legally Unregistered child care provider to serve a CPS child, however, IV-E funds cannot be used to pay a LUP/LUI.

Eligibility

A Social Worker with the DPHHS Child and Family Services Division (CFSD) determines a family's need for child protective services (CPS) child care. The Social Worker may have several options for child care. Some CPS child care is administered by CFSD on the Child and Adult Protective Services (CAPS) computer system. Other child care options are available under the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships administered by Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies. When the Social Worker selects a CPS child care scholarship through the CCR&R, a referral is made for each individual child.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Child Protective Services Child Care Under The Best Beginnings Scholarship Program**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **CFSD & CCR&R Coordination**

4 Funding Options at the CCR&R:

Four funding options are available for child care scholarships administered through CCR&Rs. Two options are managed as CPS child care, where each child has their own individual case. Two options involve the use of non-CPS child care scholarships that may be currently available to the family. If eligibility or funding is lost in one program, other funding options may be considered. While options are listed here in the order of priority, some children may not be eligible for some options.

Referral Form

A Social Worker, who selects the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program, refers each child who needs care to the local CCR&R using the Child Care Referral – Electronic Form, CFSD Child Care Referral [date].doc Use the form as follows:

1. Tab to each grey box to type in the blanks. Click on each drop-down box to view choices.
2. Complete one referral for each sibling. *(Save the file, edit, and then use 'File: Save-As' for siblings.)*
3. E-mail the completed form as an attachment to your Child Care Resource and Referral agency.
4. Save this document file for future child care updates, and print this document, as needed.
   CCR&R: If a child is currently receiving a child care scholarship, coordinate with CFSD Social Worker to determine if care can continue under the current child care program.

1) TANF Child Care
➢

A child currently resides in a household receiving TANF Cash benefits. While this is not CPS child care, a Social Worker may choose to offer additional child care for CPS purposes.

The Social Worker and the WoRC Case Manager may work together to include CPS activities within the Family Investment Agreement/Employability Plan (FIA/EP) and coordinate with the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist.

⇒ Select program type: TANF.
⇒ Select fund account: TANF State General Fund -or- CCDF.
⇒ Select reason for child care: Child Protective Services.

2) CPS TANF Child Care

CPS TANF child care may follow a child who is removed from a TANF household for up to 90 days.

⇒ Set up one case per CPS child and the child as the head of household.
⇒ Set up the child care certification plan to coincide with the end of the 90-day limit. After the end of the 90-day period, a different funding option must be considered if the child still needs care.
⇒ Select program type: Child Protective Services.
⇒ Select fund account: TANF State General Fund.
⇒ Select reason for child care: Child Protective Services.
⇒ Select single parent family: Not applicable CPS.

NOTE: A child-only TANF Cash grant alone does not qualify a child for CPS TANF child care. The child may qualify for CPS Non-TANF child care. (See non-TANF Child Care Scholarship eligibility requirements.)

3) Non-TANF Child Care

While this is not CPS child care, a low-income working family who is eligible for a Non-TANF Child Care Scholarship may benefit from additional child care for CPS purposes. If a family is not currently receiving a Non-TANF Child Care Scholarship, they may apply at the local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency.

When there is a waiting list for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships, families are prioritized by income level, relative to the federal poverty guidelines as noted in sections 2-1 and 1-5 of this child care policy manual. A CPS child is not given priority over other children on the Non-TANF waiting list. However, a family with a child who has special needs is not subject to the Non-TANF waiting list.

The Social Worker may coordinate with the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist to arrange an appropriate child care schedule.

- ⇒ Select program type: Non-TANF.
- ⇒ Select fund account: Child Care and Development Fund -or- whichever is currently available.
- ⇒ Select reason for child care: Child Protective Services.

4) CPS Non-TANF Child Care

A child in need of CPS child care who does not qualify for other child care scholarships may be referred to the CPS Non-TANF Child Care program. Funding for this program is very limited.

- ⇒ Set up one case per CPS Child, with the child as the head of household.
- ⇒ Select program type: Child Protective Services.
- ⇒ Select fund account: Non-TANF State General Fund -or- CCDF.
- ➢ ⇒ Select reason for child care: Child Protective Services.
- ⇒ Select single parent family: Not applicable (CPS.)

CFSD Child Care Options

The Child and Family Services Division may have other CPS child care options that are managed on the Child and Adult Protective Services (CAPS) computer system:

- ➢ ❑ Emergency Assistance Child Care.
- ❑ IV-E Funded Child Care.

CFSD Payments

Vouchers should be mailed to:

DPHHS – Child & Family Services Division
Program Specialist
PO Box 8005
Helena, MT 59604-8005

Rate for a Child with Special Needs

To qualify for a special needs rate, the Social Worker must include a reference to the special need in the child's approved case plan. The special needs evaluation must accompany the child care referral form. The Social Worker will work with the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist to complete the Special Needs Subsidy Rating Scale to determine an appropriate rate for child care. The process may involve gathering documentation and consulting with medical professionals.

Foster Children

The department may pay for CPS child care during the time foster parents spend at work, in training, counseling, or similar activities which are directly connected to their ability to care for foster children in their home.

Refugee Children

Eligibility for CPS child care of refugee children is determined by the same procedure as for all other recipients.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Child Care Referrals**

Supersedes: **Child Care 6-1 (5/01/05)**

References: **52-2-701 - 704 & 52-2-711 - 713 MCA**
Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM 45
CFR Part 98.20 – 47

Referral Process

Child Care Resource and Referral agencies assist families in locating child care. A computerized matching of the family's needs with the profiles of child care providers in the area provides an objective referral. The referral service is available to all families in the community and is separate from the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program.

Requests for referrals are accepted by toll-free telephone, by mail, by Internet or e-mail, or by walk in families. Referral services are available in all of the counties and rural communities of each CCR&R District.

Referral listings shall be distributed through a method requested by the parent, to include:

1. Mailing to the parent at no charge
2. Picking up by the parent
3. Faxing to the parent
4. E-mailing to the parent

Referral requests for immediate care (within two weeks) shall be processed and distributed to the parent within two (2) working days. Referral requests for future care (two+ weeks away) shall be processed and distributed to the parent within five working days.

Parents who rely on a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship shall not receive referrals for providers ineligible for the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program.

Basic Referrals

Basic referrals shall be provided to participants of and families who are eligible for the following programs:

- ❑ Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship
- ❑ TANF Cash Assistance
- ❑ Other public assistance programs
- ❑ Child Protective Services

At their discretion, CCR&R's may include additional groups to expand the availability of basic referrals.

No Fee for a Basic Referral

No fee shall be charged for basic referrals. A family eligible for a basic referral shall be given a password and the public referral URL that allows them to perform Internet searches without a fee.

Information Provided in a Basic Referral

At a minimum, a basic referral shall include the following:

1. Provider or facility name
2. Location (address is optional)
3. Telephone number
4. Age range of children
5. Facility type
6. Days/hours of business
7. The CCR&R Network disclaimer
8. Consumer education material

Enhanced Referrals

CCR&R's have the option of providing an enhanced referral, with additional information and service. Families that do not meet the eligibility criteria for basic referrals and families interested in additional service may request an enhanced referral. CCR&R's may charge the parent a fee for providing an enhanced referral.

Unbiased Referrals

All referrals must be unbiased. To ensure unbiased referrals, Referral Specialists use NACCRRAware to select providers who meet the majority of the family's preferences. Referral Specialists shall be trained to refine their queries so that at least 3 but no more than 10 providers come up in the query.

An exception for a minimum number of matches will be made for hard to find care or for locations that do not have 3 providers with vacancies. An exception for the maximum number of matches can be made for specific types of care, such as infant care, when the parent requests more than 10 providers. Queries with more than 10 matches should have additional criteria such as quality level of provider or environment added to narrow the list. Queries with less than 3 should have the search broadened.

Child care referrals for families who have children with disabilities must not be discriminatory. A provider search for these families shall include the full range of child care providers available, not just those who indicate they serve children with disabilities. A parent may work with the chosen provider and Child Care Plus+ to resolve any inclusion issues or determine accommodations needed to serve the child.

Intake – 'Child Care Need' Form

CCR&R's will conduct an initial meeting with the parent by phone, e-mail, mail, or in person to gather information regarding the family's child care needs and preferences. CCR&R's should complete or have the parent complete the Child Care Need form to obtain the information needed for a referral.

Data Entry

Information from the Child Care Need form must be entered into NACCRRAware and used to match the family with a child care provider who meets their needs. Information must be complete and accurate, to ensure effective referrals and to provide accurate statistics. The Early Childhood Services Bureau and the Montana CCR&R Network will query NACCRRAware to obtain statistics needed for reports.

Additional training and information on the NACCRRAware program, queries, reports, and matches is available at the Montana CCR&R Network office.

Parent's Employment Category

From the drop down list, pick a main category that includes the industry in which the parent is employed. For further clarification and definitions, refer to the ***North American Industry Classification System.*** See

http://www.ntis.gov/product/naics.htm for ordering information. The Referral Specialist must choose between one of the 20 categories. Choose "not employed" or, "not employed-student" if they are a full time student. Enter the name of the business for the primary person in the "Place of employment" field. (Currently says CLI CFG 3 text field, title will change to Place of employment)

Consumer Education Material

Consumer Education Material must be professional in appearance and at a minimum include the following information:

1. Guidance on how to select a quality child care program that has a checklist of items to be aware of when selecting quality care;
2. A local phone number to check for substantiated complaints or to file a complaint;
3. Information about the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program;
4. Information on child development; and
5. Information on your Child Care Resource & Referral agency.

Additional information must be available on request including:

1. Local market rate information;
2. Licensing and registration requirements;
3. Information about Child Care Tax Credits;
4. Guidance about standard child care business practices such as contracts, rates and fees, etc.; and
5. Information about transportation policies of facilities.

Consumer education material must be available in a variety of formats that allow the material to be faxed, attached as an e-mail in PDF or Text format, or viewable through a link to the Child Care Aware website.

Publications

The Montana Resource and Referral Network developed a professional brochure titled "Tips for Choosing and Using Quality Child Care" that incorporates all of the required information except the checklist. The brochure can be modified with local contact information and logos. Contact

the Network office at (406) 549-1028 for more information.

Child Care Aware has several professional brochures on selecting quality child care available for a modest cost. Publications include a checklist, infant and after school specific brochures and brochures for children with special needs. Publications can be ordered through Child Care Aware at (800) 424-2256 or at www.childcareaware.org.

Star Quality Brochure

The Early Childhood Services Bureau publishes a brochure outlining the attributes of the Star Quality program and tiered reimbursement. Parents should understand they might be able to afford a higher quality program, when a Star program receives a quality bonus with the scholarship payment.

Network Disclaimer

The network disclaimer must be printed on each referral and must read as follows; "Thank you for calling a member of the Montana Child Care Resource & Referral Network. The information on the child care providers you receive is a referral and does not imply an endorsement for a particular child care provider or facility. It is your responsibility to screen and evaluate the child care providers on your list. It is recommended that you follow the guidelines outlined in the enclosed pamphlets when interviewing and make your decision based on those findings."

Licensed & Registered Providers

All registered and licensed providers shall be entered into NACCRRAware. The Referral Specialist shall keep provider profile information current (within 1 year) and maintain up-to-date information on child care openings.

Future plans include a CCUBS interface that will populate provider demographic fields in NACCRRAware. Providers who do not wish to participate on the referral program should be checked as "No Referrals" and "No Web Referrals" in the *Referral* section.

No LUP Referrals

Legally unregistered providers (LUP/LUI) do not qualify for referrals. Providers who convert to LUP/LUI status must be coded 'Inactive' on NACCRRAware.

Non-licensed Providers

Non-licensed, legally operating programs ***may*** be added to NACCRRAware at the CCR&R's discretion. These programs include legally operating facilities in which no licensing standards exist:

- ❑ After-school programs that are exempt from licensing
- ❑ Drop-in care
- ❑ Early Head Start
- ❑ Head Start
- ❑ Preschools
- ❑ Sick-child care
- ❑ Summer programs

Provider Updates

CCR&R's are responsible for maintaining and updating the NACCRRAware database. Common updates include changes in vacancies, demographic information, adding new providers, and changing a provider's status. Provider information in NACCRRAware should be as current and accurate as possible. Accurate provider information is critical for providing good referrals, generating statewide statistics and making on-line referrals a success. Parents need to be able to retrieve the same information from the database as referral counselors without knowing all the details of the provider information.

Providers must submit the Child Care Referral Program Provider Information Form annually to their local CCR&R. Providers who do not submit the Child Care Referral Program Information Form shall be listed as "No Referrals" and "No Web Referrals."

Providers who have elected to participate in the referral program must be contacted for updates. Providers who consistently do not have vacancies, maintain an internal waiting list, and indicate that they will contact the Referral Specialist when they have a change must be contacted a minimum of two times per year to update information and waiting list status. Completion

of the annual Child Care Referral Program Provider Information form may count as one of the two updates. CCR&R's must indicate providers who meet these criteria in the comment section of the Provider General screen.

CCR&R's shall make inquiries to providers who have indicated that they have vacancies or who periodically have vacancies a minimum of every quarter. Updates may be conducted by phone, e-mail, and mail or through personal interviews. The CCR&R must make a consistent good faith attempt to obtain updates but is not responsible if the provider does not respond to the inquiry. Vacancy information for slots that are in great demand, such as infant vacancies, needs to be updated more often. Updates need to be documented in the action log. The action log can be queried to see which providers have received a recent update.

Providers are encouraged to contact their CCR&R whenever they have a change in their vacancy status.

EXAMPLE: A large well-established center participates in the referral program but has a lengthy waiting list and is insistent that they will call the CCR&R if, and when, they have a vacancy. They have indicated that they would like to be listed on referrals as a facility with a waiting list if they meet the family's other criteria.

The CCR&R referral worker has noted this in the comment section of the Provider General screen. The CCR&R receives the Child Care Referral Program Provider Information form annually and contacts them at least once per year to be in contact and ensure that they still maintain a waiting list. The CCR&R usually completes this update mid-summer in anticipation of the busy back to school referral season.

EXAMPLE: A provider has periodic vacancies. Month #1: The CCR&R sends out postcard to each provider asking them to contact the Referral Specialist if they have a vacancy or have filled a vacancy. The provider does not contact the Referral Specialist to notify of any changes. Month #2: The CCR&R calls the provider and there has been no change in the vacancy information. Month #3: the provider calls the CCR&R to report that they have filled their vacancy.

The CCR&R documents updates in NACCRAware when they have made a contact with the provider on the action log screen. The CCR&R keeps a log of when the postcard mailings and mass distribution e-mails were distributed to providers.

EXAMPLE: A provider called two weeks ago to let the Referral Specialist know that they have a full-time infant vacancy and a full-time vacancy for a 2+ year-old. The child care provider is located in an area that has limited vacancies and very few infant slots. The CCR&R has listed the provider on over 10 referrals in the last two weeks, but does not know if the vacancies have been filled.

The CCR&R shall contact the provider to ensure that they still have both vacancies, even though the CCR&R recently updated the provider's vacancies. If the vacancies have been filled, the CCR&R shall remind the provider to contact them when they have filled their vacancies.

Status Providers who have closed their child care business either temporarily or permanently should be listed as inactive *as of* the date they closed or became inactive. The reason for closure must be listed in the comment section and may be used to conduct research on provider turnover.

Community The community section in NACCRRAware is configured to collect data on business and community outreach. Businesses and agencies can be listed in the community section. Interactions with the businesses and agencies can be recorded in the action log to provide a permanent and thorough history.

NACCRRAware NACCRRAware is the software program used by the State of Montana to conduct child care referrals. The NACCRRAware Program is located on a state server and can be reached through the Internet at the following address: http://naccrraware.hhs.state.mt.us/naccrraware/servlet/naccrra.servlets.LoginS

ervlet

NACCRRAware has a comprehensive on-line help feature available on the left-hand tool bar. Help features specific to the screen are also available on each screen when applicable. Items listed in this manual are items that are specific to the configuration and business practices of Montana's NACCRRAware database.

Montana Specific Configuration

NACCRRAware utilizes Standardized Fields for national data collection. The Standardized Fields cannot be changed by users and include extensive definitions about what data should be used in the field. Montana CCR&R's are required to follow the Standardized Field definitions.

To download the Standardized Field definitions go to
http://www.naccrraware.org/ProductInfo/fields.htm

Items not specifically mentioned in this manual are covered extensively in NACCRRAware help features or in training material. Occasionally the Referral Specialist may find field definitions in NACCRRAware help that are not visible in our current configurations; these fields have been hidden because they are not applicable to Montana CCR&R's business practices.

Please contact the MCCR&R Network Technology staff person to request additional configurations, to add or delete users, to change a password or for additional assistance. CCR&R members should not contact the NACCRRAware help desk; all requests to the help desk must go through the MCCR&R Network Technology staff person.

Mapping

Mapping software must be downloaded from NACCRRA's Website and installed on every computer used to do referrals. All providers must be geomapped first, and then the family's address can be geomapped and used to make a match. Please contact MCCR&R network office for assistance with the download:

http://www.naccrraware.org/cgi-bin/Authenticate.cgi/Downloads/secure_downloads.htm

Geographic Area Use this section to define geographic locations that are specific to the local CCR&R district. For example, some areas cannot be adequately described by one zip code, city, or elementary school area, yet are common known identifiers for the area. These could include descriptors like "North Side," "University Area" or "Grant Creek." Each CCR&R can define up to 10 areas and use them as a matching feature. Each individual CCR&R will need to keep a local list of its local geographic areas and the corresponding number.

If CCR&R's choose to use the locally defined geographic area field, they will need to include their local areas on the Provider Information Sheet and on the Child Care Need form. If the CCR&R does not use this field, then it should be removed from the form.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Legally Unregistered Providers**

Supercedes: Child Care 6-2 (5/1/05)

References: Section 52-2-704(2)(d-g) through 52-2-741, MCA
Section 11.14.229, 37.95.101-102, 37.95.601-602, 37.95.630, ARM
Section 6-7 of the State Plan and 9841 CFR

General Information

A Legally Unregistered Provider (LUP) or Legally Unregistered In-home provider (LUI) is a provider certification category that is used for state payment purposes only. LUP or LUI providers are family members, friends or neighbors, who provide child care in a more informal manner than licensed or registered providers. LUPs and LUIs are generally matched to families on a one-to-one basis.

A Legally Unregistered Provider may care for no more than two unrelated children or any member in a sibling group at one time.

NOTE: A LUP who cares for more shall be referred to the Child Care Licensing Program for an "over-numbers" violation.

EXAMPLE: An LUP may care for two children in the morning and be allowed to care for two other children in the afternoon, as long as the time the children are in care does not overlap.

In-home relative care

A family may choose a relative to provide care. If the relative lives in the child's home, that person must meet the following criteria:

- A relative caregiver who lives in the child's home must be related to the child in one of the following ways:
  - Aunt or Uncle;
  - Grandparent; or
  - Great Grand Parent.

  The relationship must be verified through marriage and birth certificates. No other household member qualifies as a child care scholarship caregiver.

- The relative in-home caregiver may not be part of the child's TANF Cash or Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship assistance unit.
- The relative in-home caregiver must qualify to be a legally unregistered in-home provider of child care.

Qualifications

Applicants for status as an LUP must meet all of the following conditions:

- The provider must be age 18 or older.
- The provider must be mentally and physically capable of providing child care that meets safety, health, and other basic child care requirements and standards.
- The provider must not have a substantiated report with Child/Adult Protective Services involving harm, physical abuse, or sexual abuse to children or adults.
- The provider must not have a criminal conviction involving harm, physical abuse, or sexual abuse to children or adults.
- The provider must not be included in the parent's TANF cash assistance payment.
- The provider must list an eligible family for whom the provider will provide care in their application.
- The provider must not provide care while home schooling.

Effective Date for Payments to LUPs

Both the parent and the LUP/LUI provider must be determined eligible to participate in the Best Beginnings Scholarship program. If the background checks reveal:

- no substantiation of abuse or neglect by the applicant;
- no criminal convictions concerning violence or sexual crimes perpetrated against children or other persons; and
- no other non-compliance issues.

The effective date for a Legally Unregistered Provider will be the date their completed application is received at the CCR&R office or the date the parent is determined eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, *whichever is later.*

Application Process

1. The applicant contacts the local CCR&R.
2. The CCR&R gives the applicant an application to become an LUP. The name of the form is Legally Unregistered Provider and/or In-Home Care Application for State Payment Only (DPHHS-HCS/CC-087).
3. The application includes the following information:
   - The names and physical addresses of both the parent and the provider. (If the parent and the provider live at the same residence, the rules for in-home relative care apply.)
   - The names and birth dates of all of the children in care.
   - The names, birth dates and social security numbers of all adults in the provider's household. (All of these individuals must submit to background checks).
   - Attestations of eligibility.
   - A health and safety checklist completed by the LUP/LUI.

   The CCR&R worker shall direct the provider and parent to jointly complete the *Health and Safety Checklist*. Both the parent and provider sign this form indicating that basic health and safety considerations have been addressed.
4. The applicant and any adult outside the child's immediate family, signs *Legally Unregistered Provider Release of Information Criminal/Protective Service Background Checks* (DPHHS-HCS/CC-077) form. This form is used to obtain information from the Montana Department of Justice and Montana Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services and Tribal Child Protective Services if applicable.
5. Once the *Legally Unregistered Provider and/or In-Home Care Application for State Payment Only* (DPHHS-HCS/CC-087) has been completed and returned to the CCR&R, the applicant has 30 days to initiate the return of the remaining supporting information, excluding background checks.
6. The applicant and any adults residing in the household must complete a *Statement of Health* (DPHHS-HCS/CC-127) form attesting to the fact that the health of each provider is adequate to meet the demands of the care being provided. In some cases the

answer "yes" will require an evaluation or statement for a physician or other appropriate professional before an approval of the application can be finalized.

7. The applicant and the parent must complete the *Medication Administration Attestation* (DPHHS-HCS/CC-088) stating the provider agrees to the procedures for Medication Administration.

Background Checks

Background checks are required for the applicant and all adults living in the provider's household. Upon initial application, a comprehensive background check is completed based upon the individual's place of residence since the time they were 18 years old.

Background checks need to be updated on a yearly basis if the LUP/LUI continues to provide care. When a provider is completing the annual renewal of their LUP/LUI payment number, a Montana name based check must be repeated. This process provides assurance that the LUP/LUI has maintained a clean record during the previous year. There is no need to repeat a fingerprint check as long as the LUP/LUI maintained residence in Montana.

Montana Name Based Background Check Process

The CCR&R fills out a *Criminal History Check* (DPHHS-HCS/CC-079) form and a *CPS and APS Record Check* (DPHHS-HCS/CC-078) form.

The CPS and APS record check request is sent to:

Child and Family Service Division
Centralized Intake
PO Box 8005
Helena, MT 59620-8005

If no record exists, the results will be returned to the CCR&R agency. If there is a record, the results will be forwarded to the Early Childhood

Services Bureau's LUP evaluating official for final determination. The ECSB will notify the CCR&R agency whether to approve or deny the LUP application.

The Montana name based criminal history check is sent to:

The Early Childhood Services Bureau
PO Box 202925
Helena, MT 59620-2925

The ECSB will conduct the name based background check and return the results to the CCR&R on the yellow copy of the request form.

Tribal Background checks

If an applicant indicates that they have lived on a reservation, the CCR&R LUP worker will send a request to the named reservation for a criminal and Child Protective Service background check. The Evaluating Official will then follow up on the information as part of the application process.

Out-of-State Background Check Process

If applicants or household members have lived outside of Montana at any time in their lives since turning 18, they must obtain an out of state criminal history records check. There are three options for completing this process.

1. The applicant may contact the state or states in which they have lived to obtain the appropriate background check. The applicant will then provide that information directly to the Early Childhood Services Bureau or CCR&R agency.

FBI-Nationwide background check - $34.00
➢

Western Identification Network (WIN) background check $10.00
➢

2. The applicant may elect to have an FBI fingerprint background check completed for a cost of $34.00. This check covers all 50 states and territories.

3. The applicant may elect to have a Western Identification Network (WIN) fingerprint check completed if the applicant has lived in ONLY any of the following states, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming. The cost of a WIN background check is $10.00. (Individuals who have lived in any other location must complete the FBI record check mentioned above).

Fingerprint process

The applicant contacts their local CCR&R to obtain a Department of Justice (DOJ) fingerprint card. Fingerprints *must* be taken using the Department of Justice card, any other fingerprint card will be returned unprocessed. All of the information on the fingerprint card must be filled out before the fingerprints are taken. Once the applicant obtains the DOJ fingerprint card, he/she can go to any local law enforcement office to have fingerprints taken or check with the local CCR&R, as some have fingerprint capability on site.

Once the Department of Justice fingerprint card is complete and the prints have been taken, the applicant must send the card *and* a check or money order made out to the **Montana Department of Justice** in the amount of:

- $34.00 for an FBI background check, or
- $10.00 for a WIN background check, to:

ECSB LUP Evaluating Official
P.O. Box 202925
Helena, MT 59620-2925

OR - give them to the CCR&R to be forwarded to the evaluating official in Helena. The evaluating official will then forward the fingerprint card

and fee to the Montana Department of Justice.

Once the background check is completed, the Department of Justice will return the results to the ECSB. The ECSB will in turn notify the CCR&R of the results.

Out-of-State CPS Checks

The applicant is responsible for contacting the out of state equivalent of the Montana CPS office for a copy of their record check. They can obtain phone numbers by contacting the criminal office of each state by using the Montana DOJ list of Fingerprint Identification Units. In addition, the Evaluating Official has a copy of the National Directory of Youth & Families Services, which contains phone numbers for counties and states throughout the nation.

Forward all out of state CPS record check results to the ECSB Evaluating Official in Helena.

If the applicant is unable to obtain the needed information, they should be directed to document all attempts to reach the correct agency. The CCR&R worker will also document any attempts made on behalf of the applicant to obtain an out of state CPS check.

If the applicant is unsuccessful in reaching a person or department who can assist them, please confer with the Evaluating Official in Helena as it may not be possible to complete this process

Enter results in CCUBS

➢ The CCR&R agency must enter the results of all background checks in CCUBS on the Person Montana screen, as well as, indicating that the background check process has been finalized

Application and Approval/ Denial Process

If the applicant passes all background checks and both the parent and provider otherwise meet the eligibility criteria for the LUP/LUI program the CCR&R worker will approve the application on the License Screen in CCUBS. This triggers an alert to the LUP supervisor who reviews the worker's approval and finalizes the process

Applications will be denied for the following reasons:

1. A background check reveals a substantiation of abuse or neglect on the part of the applicant.
2. A background check reveals a conviction of a crime involving violence or sexual abuse against a child or other person.
3. The parent and provider reside at the same residence and the proposed caregiver is not an approved relative caregiver.
4. A background check reveals an on-going problem with drug or alcohol dependency that may present a danger to children in care.
5. A background check reveals an on-going problem with mental or physical illness that may present a danger to children in care.
6. The applicant fails to provide all necessary documentation needed to determine eligibility within the 30-day time limit.
7. The parent is determined to be ineligible for a Best Beginnings child care scholarship.
    a. When a parent loses eligibility the worker should terminate the LUP/LUI provider the date the parent is no longer eligible.
    b. When a parent becomes eligible again the worker should contact the ECSB LUP Supervisor to review the LUP/LUI provider and a determination will be made if the LUP/LUI provider will need to reapply.

When the application for Legally Unregistered Provider status is denied, the CCR&R worker will enter the status as denied on the License Tracking and Approval Screen in CCUBS. This action will generate an alert to the LUP supervisor for final approval. Once the supervisor has approved the denial a notice will be generated by the CCUBS system informing the applicant of the denial and of their rights

to a Fair Hearing.

CCR&R Procedure and CCUBS Process

When the CCR&R office receives a *Legally Unregistered and/or In-Home Provider Application for State Payment Only* (DPHHS-HCS/CC-087) form requesting approval as a legally unregistered or in-home child care provider for state payment purposes, the CCR&R worker will:

1. Review the application for completeness of information
   a. Enter the applicant on the ***Person*** screen in CCUBS, repeat for all other adult household members. Complete the following tabs: Names/Other IDs, General, and Addresses.
   b. Enter the background checks you are initiating on the ***Person Montana*** screen. Enter the type, source, status ("Initiated/Requested"), and the date the background check was initiated.
   c. Enter the Orientation Date and Statement of Health on the ***Person Montana*** screen on the Information tab.
   d. On the ***Provider*** screen, enter the payment method and provider rates.

      NOTE: If the provider is an LUI, the payment method must be "Parent".
   e. On the ***Provider Montana*** screen enter any other adults on the provider staff tab.
   f. On the ***License Tracking and Approval*** screen enter the application date and an LUP status as "pending". Associate yourself as the worker with the license.

2. Complete the CPS/APS and criminal records check to determine if the applicant has any substantiated child abuse/adult abuse and/or neglect incidents or has been involved in crimes that resulted in harm to people.
   a. On the ***Person Montana*** screen background check tab, change the status to "finalized". Enter the end date as the date the results were received and enter the results (no

record, no disqualifying record, disqualifying record exists, etc) for each background check that was completed. Once this information is complete, check the "cleared investigation" box.

3. Complete the approval process on the ***License Tracking and Approval*** screen.
    a. Enter all dates and approve the LUP. Case note who the family is that the LUP is caring for.
4. Inform providers that if they wish to care for more than two children of different families they must become registered.
5. Inform applicants that they will not be approved until the parents of the children they are applying to care for have been determined eligible for subsidy.
6. Inform the applicant that they will be responsible to negotiate payment with the parent(s) if the applicant is denied.
7. Provide related payment process information so the provider knows what to do in order to receive payment for the children who have been certified to receive child care services.
8. Inform the provider they must attend, within sixty days of the effective day of the approval, a child care provider orientation offered by the CCR&R on fire, safety, immunization, and health records of each child in care.

    NOTE: It may be beneficial for the applicant to be offered the opportunity to attend orientation during the period background checks are being completed. This will give them some extra time to get this done and reduce the incidence of payment numbers being terminated because an LUP provider failed to complete orientation within 60 days of approval.

    a. On the ***License Tracking and Approval*** screen enter the date the applicant attends orientation.

Orientation

    b. An applicant must attend orientation within 60 days from the date the payment number is approved. If an applicant terminates and re-applies they must attend Orientation again. (The LUP Supervisor at the ECSB may make exceptions on a case-by-case basis. If an exception is made the LUP

Processor must case note this exception).

NOTE: If a person terminates prior to the 60 days in which they are required to attend Orientation and they reapply at a later date, their application will not be approved until they attend orientation. Once they attend orientation the application date is the date they attended orientation.

Immunization

Children in LUP/LUI care are required to have immunizations except:

- If the child is being cared for by an approved relative(grandparents, great-grandparents, aunt or uncle)
- If the child is being care for in their own home
- If the child has a medical condition that contraindicates immunization

If the parent is claiming exemption, they will need to fill out the LUP/LUI *Immunization Waiver* form (HCS/CC-080).

Recertification

All current Legally Unregistered Providers will receive one letter from the CCUBS system or CCR&R six weeks before their period of certification ends, reminding them that they need to renew their certification. This will be sufficient notice to Legally Unregistered Providers that their renewal time is near.

When a provider is completing the annual renewal of their LUP/LUI payment number, a Montana name based check must be repeated. This process provides assurance that the LUP/LUI has maintained a clean record during the previous year. There is no need to repeat a fingerprint check as long as the LUP/LUI maintained residence in Montana.

Mandated Reporters

All Legally Unregistered Providers are mandated reporters of child/adult abuse and neglect. See Confidentiality in Section 1-9, as outlined in this manual for further information.

Substitute Care Giving

All Legally Unregistered Providers are subject to the rules for substitute care giving as related in Provider Overview, as outlined in Section 1-8 of this manual.

Parent Loses Eligibility

In the event that the family, which the LUP/LUI is providing care for, loses eligibility for a child care scholarship, the LUP/LUI license shall be terminated to the date that the family lost eligibility.

If the family becomes eligible once the LUP/LUI license has been terminated, the CCR&R LUP Specialist should contact the ECSB LUP Supervisor to determine whether the LUP/LUI must reapply or if the license can be re-approved.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Legally Unregistered Providers** **Medication Administration**

References: **Reference: MCA 52-2-736; 37-7-101; 50-19-701; 37-2-101; 45-2-101; standard definition arising from CARING for OUR CHILDREN, page 489. Proposed definition in 37.95.102, ARM**

Background Information

Effective October 1, 2005 a new law was enacted regarding the administration of medication in child care facilities. Because legally unregistered providers (LUP/LUI) receive payment from the state to care for children, it was determined that the law also applies to them. This law was motivated by the tragic death of an infant, Dane Heggem after he inappropriately received medication at a child care facility. The law is known as "Dane's Law" (MCA 52-2-736) and includes penalties for inappropriate administration of medication to a child in care, as well as, provisions for parents to approve administration of medication by a child care provider to their child.

Definitions:

Medicine means a remedial agent that has the property of curing, preventing, treating, or mitigating diseases or which is used for this purpose.

Emergency Services provider means a person employed by or acting as a volunteer, with an emergency services organization, including but not limited to a law enforcement officer firefighter, emergency medical technician, paramedic, corrections officer or ambulance service attendant.

Medical practitioner means any person licensed by the State of Montana to engage in the practice of medicine, dentistry, osteopathy, podiatry, optometry or nursing specialty and in the licensed practice to administer or prescribe drugs.

Bodily injury means physical pain, illness or an impairment of physical condition and includes mental illness or impairment

Serious bodily injury means bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death; causes serious permanent disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of the function or process of a bodily member or organ; or at the time of injury, can reasonably be expected to result in serious permanent disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of the function or process of a bodily member or organ. The term includes serious mental illness or impairment.

Non-prescription means any over the counter medication that is not specifically prescribed by a physician, but is recommended by a health care provider or a parent or guardian for a specific child.

Medication Administration Policy

Administering medication to children in care without written consent of the child's parent or legal guardian is illegal. A LUP/LUI provider cannot administer medication, either prescription or non-prescription unless they have written consent of the parent or guardian.

Administering medication without parental or legal guardian consent is allowed in the following circumstance:

- A medical practitioner emergency services provider or 9-1-1 responder verbally directs the LUP/LUI provider to administer a specific medication. The child is then transported to a health care facility or medical practitioner for follow-up care within a reasonable time:
    - By the child's parents or legal guardian,
    - By the LUP/LUI provider (with permission from parents or legal guardian to transport), or
    - Emergency services provider.

Forms needed by parent and provider:

FORMS

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Legally Unregistered Providers** **Medication Administration**

REQUIRED

Prior to the provider administering medication, the parent or legal guardian must fill out the *Medication Authorization Form* (HCS/CC-089). This form needs to be filled out for each medication for each child prior to administering the medication, either prescription or non-prescription. This form must also be kept on file for three years.

Once the provider has administered the medication either prescription or non-prescription the provider must fill out a *Medication Administration Log* (HCS/CC-090). This form must be kept on file for three years. A Medication Log form must be filled out for each medication for each period of time. (**For Example**: A child is prescribed a medication for an ear infection for 10 days. Once the child is done with this prescription that is one occurrence. Then two weeks later the child is prescribed the same prescription, a new, separate Log needs to be filled out.)

If a provider administers a medication inappropriately or under any other unusual circumstance they must complete a *Medication Error/Incident Report* (HCS/CC-091) and also make a note of the occurrence in the comment section of the log. The provider must notify the parent or legal guardian of the incident immediately.

If the provider is administering non-ingestible Over-the-Counter (OTC's) they need to use the *Over-the-Counter Medication Authorization form* (HCS/CC-092).

Medication Administration Attestation:

A LUP/LUI provider and parent or legal guardian are required to sign the *Medication Administration Attestation* (HCS/CC-088) stating the provider agrees to follow the procedures for Medication Administration. This form is part of the application process. Failure to sign this form will result in a denial of the application. At renewal the attestation is required to be signed by the provider and parent or legal guardian as part of the renewal application process.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Legally Unregistered Providers** **Medication Administration**

PENALTY

Violation of this policy is subject to penalty under Danes Law (52-2-736, MCA). This law defines the penalties that occur if a provider fails to secure parental permission for administration of medications, prescription or non-prescription. The penalty as defined in MCA 52-2-736 (4) (a) and (4) (b): A person convicted of purposely or knowingly administering medicine without authorization resulting in bodily injury to a child shall be imprisoned in the county jail for a term not to exceed 6 months or be fined an amount not to exceed $500, or both. A person convicted of purposely or knowingly administering medicine without authorization resulting in serious bodily injury to a child or in the death of a child shall be imprisoned for a term not to exceed 20 years or be fined an amount not to exceed $50,000, or both.

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR

JOAN MILES
DIRECTOR

STATE OF MONTANA

www.dphhs.mt.gov

PO Box 4210
HELENA, MT 59604-4210

November 9, 2005

TO: Child Care Manual Holders

From: Tina Columbus
DPHHS ECSB

Subject: Bulletin #7 – Child Care Manual
Place this bulletin after section 6-2 in the Child Care Manual. This is additional policy due to a new law.

Section: New Child Care Manual Section 6-2a
Subject: Medication Administration for LUP/LUI
Effective Date: October 1, 2005

Section 6-2a Medication Administration

Reference: MCA 52-2-736; 37-7-101; 50-19-701; 37-2-101; 45-2-101; standard definition arising from CARING for OUR CHILDREN, page 489. Proposed definition in 37.95.102, ARM

Definitions:

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Serious bodily injury means bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death; causes serious permanent disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of the function or process of a bodily member or organ; or at the time of injury, can reasonably be expected to result in serious permanent disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of the function or process of a bodily member or organ. The term includes serious mental illness or impairment.

Non-prescription means any over the counter medication that is not specifically prescribed by a physician, but is recommended by a health care provider or a parent or guardian for a specific child.

Background Information:

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Medication Administration Policy:

Administering medication to children in care without written consent of the child's parent or legal guardian is illegal. A LUP/LUI provider cannot administer medication, either prescription or non-prescription unless they have written consent of the parent or guardian.

Administering medication without parental or legal guardian consent is allowed in the following circumstance:

- A medical practitioner emergency services provider or 9-1-1 responder verbally directs the LUP/LUI provider to administer a specific medication. The child is then transported to a health care facility or medical practitioner for follow-up care within a reasonable time:
    - By the child's parents or legal guardian,
    - By the LUP/LUI provider (with permission from parents or legal guardian to transport), or
    - Emergency services provider.

Forms needed by parent and provider:

Prior to the provider administering medication, the parent or legal guardian must fill out the *Medication Authorization Form* (HCS/CC-089). This form needs to be filled out for each medication for each child prior to administering the medication,

either prescription or non-prescription. This form must also be kept on file for three years.

Once the provider has administered the medication either prescription or non-prescription the provider must fill out a *Medication Administration Log* (HCS/CC-090). This form must be kept on file for three years. A Medication Log form must be filled out for each medication for each period of time. (**For Example**: A child is prescribed a medication for an ear infection for 10 days. Once the child is done with this prescription that is one occurrence. Then two weeks later the child is prescribed the same prescription, a new, separate Log needs to be filled out.)

If a provider administers a medication inappropriately or under any other unusual circumstance they must complete a *Medication Error/Incident Report* (HCS/CC-091) and also make a note of the occurrence in the comment section of the log. The provider must notify the parent or legal guardian of the incident immediately.

Medication Administration Attestation:

A LUP/LUI provider and parent or legal guardian are required to sign the *Medication Administration Attestation* (HCS/CC-088b) stating the provider agrees to follow the procedures for Medication Administration. At renewal of the LUP/LUI another attestation is required to be signed by the provider and parent or legal guardian stating the provider has complied with the Medication Administration.

Penalty

Violation of this policy is subject to penalty under Danes Law (52-2-736, MCA). This law defines the penalties that occur if a provider fails to secure parental permission for administration of medications, prescription or non-prescription. The penalty as defined in MCA 52-2-736 (4) (a) and (4) (b): A person convicted of purposely or knowingly administering medicine without authorization resulting in bodily injury to a child shall be imprisoned in the county jail for a term not to exceed 6 months or be fined an amount not to exceed $500, or both. A person convicted of purposely or knowingly administering medicine without authorization resulting in serious bodily injury to a child or in the death of a child shall be imprisoned for a term not to exceed 20 years or be fined an amount not to exceed $50,000, or both.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Issuing the Child Care Certification Plan**

Supercedes: **Child Care 6-3 (7/1/03)**

References: **Sections 52-2-701-704, 52-2-711-713, 53-4-610 MCA; Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM**
45 CFR Part 98

General Rule

Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are issued through a child care certification plan, authorizing care for up to six months. The child care hours approved must mirror the approved parent and child's activities:

- Parent's work, school, & Family Investment Agreement/ Employability Plan (FIA/EP) activities requiring child care, allowing for travel time.
- The child's schedule, school, or alternative care arrangements.

The certification plan is mailed to the parent and the provider with the following information:

- The name(s) of the children authorized for care.
- The name of the child care provider authorized to provide care.
- The number of hours per week for which Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is authorized.
- The number of months for which authorization is granted.
- The amount of monthly co-payment, which the parent must pay to the provider.

Prospect the Length of the Child Care Certification Plan

Prospect eligibility based on the information known at the time of application or re-certification. The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist must take into account whether the family is participating in TANF, Non-TANF or CPS. If a change in eligibility is not prospected, set up a certification plan for six months.

CCR&R Eligibility Specialists should create a certification plan, which closely matches the parent's work and/or school schedule if there is a need for care during these hours. If the parent is on a regular schedule, the certification plan should be set up using a daily time frame. If the parent is on a varied

schedule, the certification plan should be set up using a weekly-approved amount of time. The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist will consider travel time for the parent to and from work in determining the certification plan.

If the household anticipates a change in the reason or the need for child care, set the length of the child care certification plan to end when the household change occurs.

> EXAMPLE: A college student applies for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship and meets all program requirements. The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist has determined the parent eligible for child care but only issued a certification plan until the end of the semester because the need for child care is uncertain past that date.

Once eligibility is correctly prospected, a child care certification plan should be issued as soon as possible. If a delay occurs, such as waiting for LUP background checks, issue the child care certification plan based on the date eligibility was determined.

> NOTE: Should the eligibility specialist find out the family was not actually eligible when the determination was made, due to misinformation of some type, a certification plan would not be issued.

A child care certification plan may be modified or terminated at any time. Ten days before any reduction of the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, a new child care certification plan or closure notice, is mailed to the parent and the provider. See Change Reporting, as outlined in Section 6-4 of the manual.

Maximum Hours

Child care may be authorized for up to 20 hours per day. (24-hour care will be paid as two full-time days.) However, care in excess of ten hours/day may be approved only when the parent's activity exceeds ten hours/day. Verification of the work/school/FIA schedule must be received from the employer before care in excess of ten hours/day will be approved.

- ⇒ Verify approved work/school/FIA schedules before authorizing care in excess of ten hours per day.
- ⇒ Case note the reason for authorizing a child care certification plan in excess of ten hours per day.

⇒ If the certification plan specifies service exceeding 16 hours of care during a calendar day, the state will pay twice the daily rate for each hour exceeding 16.

Minimum Hours
➢

In an effort to increase billing accuracy, child care certification plans shall represent the most accurate amount of child care needed by each child and each family. CCR&Rs have the ability to override invoices when the family exceeds the amount of care certified.

EXAMPLE: A parent has a varying work schedule. The parent consistently needs 20 hour each week for employment. The parent occasionally needs 25 or 30 hours per week for employment.

⇒ The child care certification plan should be issued at 20 hours per week and overridden as needed.

EXAMPLE: One child arrives after Head Start, and their sibling attends after school, arriving one hour later.

⇒ Set up a schedule specific to each child on the child care certification plan.

Extending Child Care Hours – ***Meeting the Parent's Need for Child Care***

A family may have a need to temporarily extend hours beyond the current certification plan. The CCR&R eligibility specialist may approve additional hours beyond the limit of the child care certification plan if the need is verified. Document the need for more hours with written verification.

⇒ Verify the need for additional child care.

⇒ Document the need for additional care on CCUBS:
- Enter reason for additional care on the comment line on the invoice screen; or
- Case note the reason for additional care.

⇒ When an invoice requires an override, the reason for the override will be entered on the invoice upper comment line before it is overriden.

⇒ Keep hardcopy documentation on file:
- Case file: written notes from parents, employers, or school

officials;
- Invoice file: hand written comments;
- General File: School calendars, or similar materials, or documentation of community events that affect a number of families.

CCR&Rs shall keep hardcopy records as reference for five years to fulfill audit requirements.

EXAMPLES of these situations include, but are not limited to, the following:
- A child who normally attends child care only after-school has a full day out of school.
- A parent must tend to the medical emergency of an immediate family member.
- A parent picks up an additional work shift on short notice.
- A parent has a short-term employment or training related schedule change.

No Need for Child Care

An employment or household change relieves the need for child care.
- ⇒ End the certification plan;
- ⇒ Notify the parent and provider; and
- ⇒ Case note.

EXAMPLE: One parent takes a night shift and is available to care for the children during the day. If the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is no longer needed, close the case.

EXAMPLE: Child moves out of the household, resulting in no need for care -or- the second parent moves back in and is available to care for the children.

Change in Provider

Parents are responsible for notifying the CCR&R, within one business day, when changing or adding a child care provider. If the parent fails to notify the CCR&R of a provider change, but begins to use the new provider, the "new" provider is not eligible for payment until the date the family notifies the CCR&R.

Policy	Requirements
Parent is Unavailable	A parent must be participating in approved work/school/FIA activities when using their Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. In very limited circumstances, it may be determined that a parent is temporarily unavailable to care for their children, because: ❑ The parent is unable to provide a safe environment for the child(ren), due to a mental, addictive or physical limitation; or ❑ The parent is tending to the medical emergency of an immediate family member; or ❑ The parent may be working in a different city for a temporary period of time. ⇒ Case note the assessment that determined the reason a parent is unavailable to care for their child(ren). ⇒ Revisit the parent's availability at recertification.
Rehabilitation? - Only if Working	Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are not available for rehabilitation activities, when the family does not meet a work requirement.
Respite Care? - Only if CPS	Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are not available for respite care unless a social worker from the Child and Family Services Division (CFSD) refers the family for Child Protective Services authorizes (CPS) child care.
Sleep Time	Sleep time may be approved for parents working or attending education or training activities during the night on a very limited basis, only if no other resource exists. Verify and document the arrangement in case notes. ⇒ Verify work/school schedule. ⇒ Verify no other resources exist. ⇒ Case note factors affecting the child care schedule.

Policy	Requirements
Split Work Shift	A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may span the break in a split work shift, if it is impractical for the parent to pick up their children during the break. At a minimum, the following factors should be considered: ❑ Length of break; ❑ Travel time and travel arrangements; and ❑ Child's schedule while in care (e.g. nap time?). ⇒ Case note the factors affecting the child care schedule.
Study Time	Generally, study time is not allowable. However, a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may span the break between classes, if it is impractical for the parent to pick up their children during the break. At a minimum, the following factors should be considered: ❑ Length of parent's break; ❑ Parent's travel time and travel arrangements; and ❑ Child's schedule while in care (e.g. nap time, lunch time?). ⇒ Case note the factors affecting the child care schedule. If the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship spans the break between classes, a student may use this time to study. EXAMPLE: A post-secondary education student has class from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m., and class from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be used to cover the period between 10:00 and 1:00. Students may use a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship to complete out-of-home lab work. ⇒ Verify the need for out-of-home lab time. Students are not eligible for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship during in-home study time.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Issuing the Child Care Certification Plan**

Policy	Requirements
Maintaining Continuity of Care	As a family's circumstances change, eligibility issues may interrupt the child care certification plan and the child's continuity of care, see Absent Day Policies and Continuity of Care, as outlined in Section 6-6 of this manual: ❑ Certified Enrollment ❑ Extending Child Care Hours ❑ Fill-the-Gap ❑ Grace Period ❑ Hold-the-Slot ❑ Holidays ❑ Medical Appointments ❑ Medical Emergency ❑ Suspending a Case

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Co-payment Requirements**

Supercedes: **Child Care 6-4 (7/01/03)**

References: **Sections 52-2-701-704, 52-2-711-713, 53-4-610 MCA; Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM**
45 CFR Part 98

General Rule: Each family receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship pays part of the cost of child care. Each family is obligated to pay a co-payment to their child care provider by the end of the service month. The co-payment is based on their family size and gross income as illustrated on the Montana Child Care Sliding Fee Scale as outlined in Section1-5.

The required co-payment is considered the initial down payment for the child care scholarship each month. A family loses eligibility for further child care scholarships if they do not pay the co-payment, or make satisfactory arrangements with their child care provider.
NOTE: There is no co-payment obligation when the reason for care is CPS.

Cost of Care is Less than the Co-payment If the month's cost of child care is less than the monthly co-payment obligation, the family is obligated to pay only the cost of care, not the full co-payment indicated on the child care certification plan.

More Than One Provider There are times when a parent may need to use two or more child care providers. In these circumstances, the CCR&R should attach the family's co-payment to the provider, which does the majority of the care. In the case where two providers provide an equal amount of care, the parent may choose which provider should receive the co-payment. If the child, for some reason, does not attend the primary facility during a month, then the co-payment will default to the secondary provider

Disputed Co-payments Parents who fail to pay their co-payment by the end of the service month will lose the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship until the co-payment is paid.

The child care provider indicates the amount of co-payment received on the monthly invoice.

For the purposes of determining a family's eligibility for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, the first payment(s) made to the provider will be counted toward satisfying the parent's co-payment obligation. Any other unpaid fees (over-and-above rates, late charges, etc.) are not considered for the purpose of maintaining the parent's eligibility for the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship and are solely the responsibility of the parent and the provider.

Notice of Unpaid Co-payment

Parents receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship shall pay their co-payment by the end of the service month. If the parent does not pay their co-payment or make satisfactory arrangements with their provider, the CCR&R Specialist shall:

- ⇒ Request verification within 10 days, notifying the parent and provider.
- ⇒ Provide notice to the parent and provider 10 days before case closure.
- ⇒ The parent has until the closure date to verify that they have paid the required co-payment.
- ⇒ If verification of payment (or satisfactory arrangement) is not received, close the case.
- ⇒ Case note.

- ❑ If the family provides written verification from their provider that they have paid the co-payment by the deadline, the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may continue.
- ❑ If the parent does not provide written verification by the deadline, the eligibility specialist shall close the scholarship. Fair Hearing rights are included on the closure notice. The CCR&R shall notify the provider the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is closed.
- ❑ If the parent pays their co-payment after the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is closed, the family may be eligible beginning on the day the co-payment was paid or verified, under the following conditions:
  - o Eligibility must be re-determined; and

- Child Care and Development Funds must be available.

Satisfactory Arrangements in Lieu of Cash Co-payment

A parent may compensate a child care provider with goods or services in lieu of paying the co-payment in cash. The child care provider indicates their satisfaction with the arrangement by marking the co-payment as paid-in-full on the monthly invoice.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Change Reporting**

Supercedes: **Child Care 6-5 (7/01/03)**

References: **Sections 52-2-701-704, 52-2-711-713, 53-4-6ten MCA; Sections 37.80.ten1-ten3, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM 45 CFR Part 98**

Change Reporting Requirements

➢ Income eligible families receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship based on work/school/FIA activities shall report any change in circumstance, which may affect their eligibility or their need for child care to the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency within ten days of knowing the change. Changes reported to the CCR&R by telephone shall be followed up in writing by the parent within ten days.

Reporting changes to other DPHHS or State entities is not adequate. The report must be made to the CCR&R. However, the CCR&R may accept a copy of the participant's written change notice submitted to another agency, in lieu of the Change Report Form (DPHHS-HCS/CC-016), if the information satisfies the CCR&R's need for information.

EXAMPLE: A parent participating in the TANF program reports an address change to the WoRC office. The CCR&R may accept a facsimile of the change report provided to the WoRC office.

If the change is reported by telephone, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist shall follow up by sending the Change Report Form (DPHHS-HCS/CC-016) to the parent to confirm the change, sign, and return it to the CCR&R.

⇒ Case note the change report and request confirmation on Change Report Form (DPHHS-HCS/CC-016).

Families should use the Change Report Form (DPHHS-HCS/CC-016), to report changes to their CCR&R Eligibility Specialist. The form reminds parents of the reporting requirements:

- Change in employment of any household member;
- Loss of employment to less than the minimum hourly work requirement;

- The addition or loss of a household member;
- A change in mailing or residence address;
- A change in school attendance;
- A change in child care provider (report immediately); and
- Entering or leaving the TANF Cash program.

A child care certification plan may be modified or terminated at any time. When the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist makes a change in a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, the parent shall be notified in writing. When the CCR&R or State takes an adverse action, a notice is mailed to the parent ten days before the action.

CCR&R Evaluates the Change

If any change in circumstance is not prospected when eligibility is determined, the change must be evaluated when reported to the CCR&R. Depending on the change circumstances, the family may:

- Make adjustments to allow Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship to continue for their child:
  - Change in child care provider;
  - Child moves to another Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship household; or
  - If the family moves within a different Montana CCR&R District, the Eligibility Specialist must redetermine eligibility when the family contacts the new CCR&R.
- Benefit from a change which increases their Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship:
  - Request more child care hours;
  - Request a lower co-payment, because income decreased or household size increased.
    - ⇒ Run a what-if scenario.
- Postpone some changes which decrease their Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship:
  - A change in income is not to be considered until re-certification unless it benefits the family; or
  - The loss of a household member unless a child moves to another Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship household.

- Lose eligibility for the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship:
  - Loss of TANF Cash eligibility;
  - A teen parent is no longer attending high school (or meeting the work requirement);
  - The parent is not meeting the minimum hourly work requirement;
  - A household change relieves the need for child care;
  - A change in work schedule relieves the need for child care;
  - The child care provider is not certified for payment; or
  - Parent fails to pay co-payment.

Case Notes

Whenever the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist considers a change, the assessment shall be documented in case notes if the information is not somewhere else in the system. Case notes shall be made at, but not limited to, the following stages while serving a family:

- Eligibility determination;
- Change reports (any relevant communication); and
- Scholarship closure.

Include information regarding eligibility including, but not limited to, the following assessments:

- Household membership;
- Income; and
- Activities (parent & child schedules).

There is no need to repeat information captured elsewhere in the system unless further explanation is needed.

EXAMPLE: A parent fails to recertify and there has been no communication between than parent and the CCR&R, other than routine notice mailings. The Eligibility Specialist closes the case using "Failed to Complete Application/Re-certification" as the reason. Assuming there are no other circumstances to report, the closure reason is adequate.

What-If Scenario

The net effect of some Non-TANF household changes may not be clear. For example, a parent may return to the household, bringing a nominal amount of income to the household. The Child Care Resource and Referral Eligibility Specialist may present options to the family:

- ⇒ Run a what-if scenario by entering the household change(s), including the income and the proposed child care hours.
- ⇒ Present the family with the option of keeping the current arrangement or incorporating the changes.
- ⇒ If the household change benefits the family, the family may choose to re-determine eligibility and a request a new child care certification plan, which will have the same end-date as the original certification plan.
- ⇒ If the change is not favorable to the family, the CCR&R should counsel the family regarding the pending impact of the household change at re-certification time.
- ⇒ Case note.

Failure to Change Report

The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist shall evaluate changes that were not reported in a timely manner. While the parent has an obligation to report changes within ten days, the consequence of not reporting depends on whether the change causes a loss of basic eligibility. Failure to report, in itself, does not cause eligibility to be lost. Income changes generally do not create basic eligibility issues during the certification span. However, the failure to meet the work requirement does create a basic eligibility issue. If the work requirement is not being met, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist should communicate to the family the Continuity of Care Policies as outlined in Section 6-6.

Assuming income was prospected correctly when eligibility was determined, the increase in income does not affect the family's eligibility during the certification span. The family maintains basic eligibility when income fluctuates during the certification plan. Failure to report the income change before recertification may simply result in a family losing eligibility, under short notice, when the family recertifies.

The change in employment does raise a question about basic eligibility. A family no longer meeting the work requirement loses eligibility, however, we

allow ten days for change reporting.

If the parent reports an employment change within ten days, and:

- income decreases, the parent may be eligible for a lower co-payment; or
- if income increases, the parent may be counseled regarding a future increase in co-payment or future eligibility loss occurring at recertification time; or
- if employment is lost, the parent may be eligible for a Grace Period.

If the parent fails to report an employment change within ten days, and:

- the parent takes another job to meet the work requirement within ten days, the parent still maintains basic eligibility; the parent is re-employed before the allowed reporting period expires. The employment change does not cause eligibility to be lost. Nor does failure to report cause eligibility to be lost. In this situation, the parent would not be subject to overpayment for this period, assuming child care is used for appropriate activities; or
- If unemployment extends beyond ten days without a change report, the parent loses eligibility. The parent also loses the opportunity to apply for the grace period. The parent's failure to report unemployment delays the CCR&R's knowledge of the family's ineligibility; the child care scholarship must be closed. After eligibility is lost, any further use of the child care scholarship is subject to overpayment. Any subsequent employment does not rekindle eligibility unless the family reapplies.

Change	Policy
Child is Temporarily Absent	Remove a child's needs from the household if he/she is gone from the home for more than 30 days. ⇒ If the only eligible child in a child care scholarship is gone from the home for 30 days, close the child care scholarship. ⇒ If one child, of two or more eligible children, in a household is gone for

Change	Policy
	more than 30 days, remove his/her needs from the child care scholarship. ⇒ Case note. EXAMPLE: A mother has a work related training that takes her away from home for a week. Her child stays with a family friend for the week. The child care scholarship remains valid during the temporary absence. EXAMPLE: Children live with one parent for the school year and the other parent for the summer. If they are absent from one residence for more than 30 days, the respective child care scholarship will close.
Child Moves In or has Newborn	A new child may join a participating household without being placed on the Non-TANF waiting list. ⇒ Verify household membership; ⇒ Add the child and his/her needs to the household; ⇒ Re-determine eligibility; and ⇒ Case note.
Child Moves Out	A child who moves to another household for more than 30 days shall be removed from the previous child care scholarship household and considered part of the new household. If the new household needs help with child care, a new separate scholarship application is required. NOTE: A child may concurrently participate in two households. ⇒ Case note.
Family Moves	A family that moves to another location in Montana may maintain eligibility during the move. All reporting requirements apply, however, the move, in itself, does not cause a family to lose eligibility. If a parent changes jobs within the ten-day reporting period, the parent may maintain eligibility.

Change	Policy
	The child care scholarship may be transferred to a new Eligibility Specialist within Montana. The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist must re-determine eligibility. ⇒ Verify and update new address; ⇒ CCR&R Eligibility Specialists shall contact each other to coordinate the move; ⇒ CCR&R Eligibility Specialist shall re-determine eligibility; and ⇒ Case note. NOTE: A family who moves out of Montana loses eligibility for Montana's Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.
Head-of-Household Change	A change in the head-of-household does not create a break in eligibility, as long as, all other eligibility factors are maintained. ⇒ Verify household membership; and ⇒ Case note household changes in both cases.
Household Member Moves Out	A decrease in household size, which was not prospected when eligibility was determined, does not affect eligibility or the co-payment until re-certification time. ⇒ Verify household membership; ⇒ File the change report form for reference at re-certification; and ⇒ Case note.
Income Decreases	If a Non-TANF family's income decreases and they request to have their co-payment lowered, evaluate the family's work hours and income. Prospect the next month's co-payment accordingly: ⇒ Verify income change; ⇒ Adjust the certification plan to coordinate with the need for child care

Change	Policy
	based on family's work hours; ⇒ Reevaluate the family's income to prospect a lower co-payment; ⇒ Provide the 'Request Grace Period . . .' application to the family o If the grace period is applicable, maintain the child care hours for 30 days o If the grace period does not apply, reduce the child care hours to reflect the new work & school schedule; ⇒ Notify the parent and the provider of the change or closure o If the family no longer meets the work requirement, close the child care; and ⇒ Case note.
Income Increases	An increase in income, which was not prospected when eligibility was determined, does not affect eligibility or the co-payment until re-certification time. ⇒ File the change report form for reference at re-certification; ⇒ Adjust the certification plan, if needed, to coordinate with the need for child care based on family's work hours; and ⇒ Case note. NOTE: If income was not prospected correctly, the eligibility specialist shall reevaluate eligibility based on the correct information.
Parent Moves In	When a parent is added to the household, the family size increases and household income may increase. The Eligibility Specialist may run a what-if scenario and present options to the family: ⇒ Run a what-if scenario by entering the household change(s), including the income and the proposed child care hours. ⇒ Present the family with the option of keeping the current arrangement or incorporating the changes. ⇒ If the household change benefits the family, the family may choose to re-determine eligibility and a request a new child care certification plan.

Change	Policy
	⇒ If the change is not favorable to the family, the CCR&R should council the family regarding the pending impact of the household change at re-certification time. ⇒ Case note.
Parent Moves Out	When a parent moves out of the household, the need for a child care scholarship may increase. ⇒ Re-determine eligibility, if a lower co-payment is desired; and ⇒ Case note. Parents in the process of divorce or separation may individually continue participation under separate households, as long as all other eligibility factors are maintained. NOTE: A child may concurrently participate in two households.
Provider Change	The parent may choose a new child care provider at any time. The child care certification plan links the child/family to the child care provider. The child care certification plan must list the child's current provider before a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship can be issued. The parent should plan ahead when changing child care providers and notify the CCR&R prior to the provider change or within one business day of the change. The CCR&R may accept child care provider changes done by phone, if the parent is the person noticing the CCR&R by phone. ⇒ Adjust the certification plan to reflect the new provider, maintaining the same end-date and eligibility information; ⇒ The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist should write the new provider change on a Child Care Service Plan, date the effective date of the change, date when notice of the change was received, initial the change and keep a copy in the family's file; ⇒ The new certification plan will serve as notification to the parent and to both providers; and

Change	Policy
➢	⇒ Case note. NOTE: The parent & the child care provider are responsible for notifying each other of changes. They are responsible for any notice obligations or agreements between them.
➢	If the parent fails to notify the CCR&R of a provider change within one business day, the parent is responsible for the cost of care at the new provider/facility until such change is reported to the CCR&R. The CCR&R will not make changes to the certification plan until notified either by phone or in writing by the parent, of the new provider change. Provider changes on certification plans should not be backdated to the actual date of the change if the CCR&R did not receive appropriate notice of the change. The certification plan should reflect the date the CCR&R was notified by the parent or the effective date of the change in provider; whichever is later. Case note the circumstances. NOTE: In a situation where the parent failed to notify the CCR&R of a change in provider, the existing provider may bill Certified Enrollment days for the period between when care stopped at the existing provider and the parent reported the change of a new provider to the CCR&R if the existing provider thought the child would return to their facility. The parent is responsible for any notice or payment obligation to the previous child care provider.
Provider Not Certified for Payment	The provider is not certified to receive State payment: ⇒ End the certification plan; ⇒ Notify the parent and provider; ⇒ Case note; and ⇒ If TANF Cash, notify WoRC Case Manager via e-mail.

Change	Policy
Teen-Parent No Longer in School	A teen-parent, participating in the Non-TANF program, who no longer attends school may continue receiving a child care scholarship if he/she meets the work requirement. ⇒ If the parent is meeting the work requirement, change the reason for care to 'Working'. ⇒ If the parent is not meeting the work requirement, close the child care scholarship. ⇒ Case note.
Teen-Parent On Summer Break	A teen-parent may maintain eligibility for child care scholarship if they meet the work requirement during summer break. ⇒ Use 'Working,' as the reason for care for the summer. ⇒ Case note. The child care scholarship will be closed for the teen-parent who does not meet work requirements during the summer. The teen-parent may reapply when returning to school.
Work Requirement Not Met	A reduction in work hours to less than the minimum hourly work requirement. ⇒ Provide the 'Request Grace Period . . .' application to the family o If the grace period is applicable, set the certification plan to end in 30 days following employment loss. o If the family no longer meets the work requirement and the grace period is not applicable, close the child care. ⇒ Notify the parent and provider of the closure date. ⇒ Case note.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Absent Day Policies – Maintaining the Continuity of Care**

Supercedes: **Child Care 6-6 (5/01/05)**

References: **Sections 52-2-701-704, 52-2-711-713, 53-4-610 MCA; Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM 45 CFR Part 98**

General Rule

After the child care certification plan is issued, a family's schedule may vary. While a family's child care certification plan may be modified or terminated at any time, the following policies are useful in avoiding temporary gaps in eligibility and services to children. The policies can be grouped under the following intentions:

- Maintain Parent's Eligibility;
- Meet the Parent's Need for Additional Child Care; and
- Stabilize Child Care Arrangement.

While all of these policies benefit the family, some are focused on the needs of their child care providers who would not be available without adequate compensation. The relationship of the child with their provider depends on the stability of the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. The CCR&R, the family, and the provider all have an interest in maintaining continuity of care during transition periods.

Absent Day Policies	Description & Requirements
Certified Enrollment Days – ***Stabilize Child Care Arrangement***	Certified Enrollment (CE) is a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship benefit provided to the parent who is responsible for paying their child care provider when a child is temporarily absent from full-time care in a licensed or registered child care facility. Legally unregistered care does not qualify for this benefit. Part-time child care certification plans do not qualify for this benefit. Explained absence means that parent has stated or notified the provider why the

Absent Day Policies	Description & Requirements
	child is not in care, for example: sick child or family is on vacation. Unexplained absence means the child care provider does not know why the child is absent from care. The parent did not notify the provider as to why the child is absent. The following restrictions apply for Certified Enrollment days: ❑ The provider shall be licensed or registered. ❑ The child shall be certified for full time care in the facility (30+ hrs/week on a regular basis). ❑ Provider shall be open for business while the child is absent. ❑ The provider must charge non-scholarship families when their children are absent. ❑ CE hours claimed must reflect the time the child was scheduled to be in attendance. ❑ The provider believes the child will return to the facility following the absence. ❑ CE Hours are not to be claimed when a parent/child does not intend to return to the full time placement in the child care facility. ❑ No more than 150 CE Hours may be claimed during one State fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). ❑ CE Hours are converted to 'Days' in the same manner as hours are converted to full days. Ten CE Hours will be assessed for a full CE day of six to ten hours. EXAMPLE: The parent tells the provider that the child will be gone for one week. It has been 10 days and the child has not returned. The provider contacts the CCR&R on the 10th absent day. The CCR&R cannot locate the family. The CCR&R sends a closure notice to the parent and to the provider. The CCR&R instructs the provider to charge CE days for the ten days of

Absent Day Policies	Description & Requirements
	absences, when the provider believed the child would be returning to her care. The CCR&R pays the ten notice days as regular scheduled days according to the certification plan. EXAMPLE: On a Friday, the parent tells the provider that the child will be gone the next week. On Monday, the parent calls the CCR&R and notifies them of a change in providers. The original provider has billed ten CE days on the invoice. The CCR&R denies the ten CE days and notifies the provider that any notice requirement is between the parent and the provider. The provider claims Certified Enrollment hours on the invoice, when billing for absent time. CE hours are reported on the provider's monthly Statement of Remittance (SOR) and the parent's monthly Explanation of Benefits (EOB). ⇒ When a child is certified for full time child care at one facility, CCUBS will automatically assign CE days to their record. ⇒ When a child is certified for full time child care, but the care is split between two facilities, and both facilities are owned by the same person or entity and both facilities are eligible for the Best Beginnings Scholarship program, the CCR&R will create only one certification plan to reflect full time child care in order for CCUBS to assign CE days. ⇒ The CCR&R will have to monitor the invoices so child care is being used appropriately. The CCR&R will offer technical assistance to the provider on a case-by-case basis in these instances. ⇒ The provider is still required to keep actual attendance records for both facilities, however only completes one invoice for the child each month, but comments where the child actually attended. ⇒ The CCR&R worker will case note the appropriate information.

Absent Day Policies	Description & Requirements
	EXAMPLE: A parent enrolls their child with one provider who has two separate facility sites. These two facilities even have separate provider numbers, but are under one umbrella federal EIN number, which can be validated on the organization screen in CCUBS. One of the sites provides child care on Monday – Friday, normal business hours, the other site provides child care on weekends and evenings. The parent works Wednesday – Sunday, a regular 8 hours a day. The CCR&R should set up a full-time certification plan for Wednesday – Sunday at one facility. This would allow the child to be eligible for certified enrollment days. All other certified enrollment restrictions apply. The provider is still required to keep actual attendance records at each facility site and note the invoice of where care was actually provided.
Hold-the-Slot - ***Stabilize Child Care Arrangement***	In very limited, prior arranged situations, Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship payment can be paid to licensed or registered child care providers to hold a child care slot even though the child is not in attendance. The child's certified enrollment days must be used first. When a parent is between eligible activities or the child is temporarily absent, care may be certified to hold-the-slot, on a one-time basis for up to 30 days. A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship payment can be authorized to pay the provider to hold-the-slot for a child only if the provider provides proof they would give the slot away to a specific family if the payment was not made: ❑ The provider must be licensed or registered. ❑ The child care provider provides a written-signed statement from the provider stating their policy to charge families when the child is absent. Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship payment will only be made if the provider charges non-scholarship families for the same service. ❑ The provider must make prior arrangements with the CCR&R to hold-the-slot during the temporary absence.

Absent Day Policies	Description & Requirements
	❑ The child care provider provides a list of the children who would potentially fill the slot. ❑ The child must be enrolled full time at the facility (30 hrs. /week+) ❑ The child's certified enrollment days must be used before a provider may use hold-the-slot and any CE days used go towards the total 30 day allowance. ❑ The child's absence may not exceed 30 consecutive calendar days. ❑ Whether the child is in attendance or not, the parent is responsible to pay the provider the monthly co-payment. ❑ Hold-the-slot may not be used in consecutive periods. ❑ Hold-the-slot is not limited to 30 days total, in a calendar year. EXAMPLE: A work-study college student has three weeks of the Christmas holiday off. The family leaves town, but the child care provider has another child on her waiting list, which might take that slot if the parent does not pay to reserve the slot. It is her policy to charge non-scholarship families whether the children are there or not. Certified enrollment days have been used. After getting proof of the provider's policy and the provider's waiting list, cover the three weeks if all other eligibility factors are met. When a parent and provider request to hold-the-slot, the CCR&R shall: ⇒ Have a copy of the provider's policy to charge for care when a child is absent. ⇒ Verify the full time child's certified enrollment days will be, or have been, used first. ⇒ Verify the provider has someone who would fill the slot if the child left the slot vacant. ⇒ Remind the parent that the co-payment is still payable when holding the slot. ⇒ Case note the arrangement before the hold-the-slot period begins.

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

Section:
Serving the Family

CHILD CARE

Subject:
Absent Day Policies –
Maintaining the Continuity of Care

Absent Day Policies	Description & Requirements
Holidays – ***Stabilize Child Care Arrangement***	If licensed or registered providers charge all families for certain holidays, even though their facility is closed, providers may bill the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship on behalf of assisted families when a period of authorized child care falls on the observation of that holiday. ❑ The provider shall be licensed or registered. ❑ The provider shall provide verification that they charge non-scholarship parents for the same service. ❑ The provider shall bill for the number of hours normally scheduled for that child on that day-of-the-week. ❑ The following holidays qualify under this benefit: New Years Day Memorial Day Fourth of July Labor Day Thanksgiving Day Christmas Day ❑ If the holiday falls on a weekend, the provider may apply the holiday policy on the day that the State of Montana observes the holiday.
Suspending a Case – ***Maintain Parent's Eligibility***	When a family temporarily loses eligibility, the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be suspended for up to 30 days. The case remains open, however the scholarship is not paid. Following the suspension, the family may continue under current eligibility and the child care scholarship may continue. If the family loses eligibility past 30 days, close the case. EXAMPLE: The children of a household leave to visit their absent parent. This family's child care scholarship may be suspended for 30 days. If the children return within 30 days, the child care scholarship may be resumed. If the children are out of the household for more than 30 days, the child care scholarship shall be closed.

Continuity of Care Policies	Description & Requirements
Fill-the-Gap – ***Maintain Parent's Eligibility***	If the family is in transition from one assistance program to another, basic eligibility may be temporarily jeopardized. CCR&R Eligibility Specialists may extend a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship to the end of the benefit month in an effort to maintain continuity of care to bridge the gap between programs. ⇒ Case note the period of transition and the need for care during the transition. EXAMPLE: A TANF Cash participant finds employment after TANF benefits are issued for the month. The parent needs child care to begin work. Since the new job was not prospected at the time TANF Cash eligibility was prospected, a dependent care disregard is not immediately available. A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be provided to fill-the-gap when a family transitions out of the TANF Cash program.
Grace Period – ***Maintain Parent's Eligibility***	When a parent loses employment, eligibility for the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is jeopardized. The purpose of the Grace Period is to support the parent's effort to look for work while maintaining continuity of care for the child(ren) and to stabilize the relationship with the child care provider. The Grace Period allows the current Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship to continue for 30 days following the job loss, based on the date the employment change occurred (not the date reported to the CCR&R). Additionally, if the family experiences a reduction in child care hours, the grace period allows current child care arrangements to continue for 30 days. EXAMPLE: A family may request a lower co-payment because work hours have been reduced yet they still meet the minimum work. requirement. If the grace period is granted, child care hours may be maintained for 30 days to ease the transition to fewer child care hours. This provides time for the parent and provider to make necessary adjustments in the care arrangement.

Continuity of Care Policies	Description & Requirements
	If the parent reports the employment reduction or job loss to the Child Care Resource & Referral within ten days, the parent may apply for a ***Grace Period for Child Care Assistance*** (DPHHS-HCS/CC-012). The grace period may be granted or denied, by the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist, depending upon the circumstances indicated on the 'Grace Period' application. All of the following restrictions apply: ❑ The parent shall report the job loss, or reduction in employment hours, to the CCR&R within ten days. ❑ The parent shall apply to extend the child care scholarship on the ***Request Grace Period for Child Care Benefits*** form (DPHHS-HCS/CC-012). ❑ The parent shall demonstrate good cause for losing employment or employment hours. ❑ The parent shall be looking for employment. ❑ The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist has the discretion to grant or deny the grace period based on the good cause evaluation. ❑ While one purpose of the grace period is to maintain child care arrangements; the Eligibility Specialist has the flexibility to adjust the child care schedule so the parent can look for work. EXAMPLE: After losing a job in which they worked the graveyard shift, a parent may need daytime child care for job search activities. ❑ Only one grace period may be granted per job loss; grace periods may not be granted consecutively. ❑ There is no explicit limit to the number of times a parent may use the Grace Period. However, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist has the option of denying the request based on the apparent misuse of the benefit. When a parent is approved for the grace period:

Continuity of Care Policies	Description & Requirements
➤	⇒ Re-determine eligibility. ⇒ Issue a new certification plan that ends 30 days following the work reduction/job loss. ⇒ If the parent finds a job before the Grace Period expires; prospect and verify eligibility. Redetermine eligibility in CCUBS and set up certification plans as if the parent has just completed a recertification process. ⇒ Case note the new eligibility information and any need for a schedule change. ⇒ The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist completes the ***Request Grace Period for Child Care Benefits*** form (DPHHS-HCS/CC-012) and mails it to the Early Childhood Services Bureau. If the parent does not return, the certification plan will serve as notice that the Child Care Scholarship ends. No overpayment will be due. Eligible parents using the grace period for the Non-TANF Child Care Scholarship may receive one month of TANF Cash benefits while seeking employment to regain eligibility for the Non-TANF Scholarship. Two specific limitations apply: ❑ The parent shall have new employment starting before the end of the grace period, which maintains their Non-TANF eligibility. ❑ The parent's TANF Cash case will close when the Non-TANF grace period ends. If the parent's TANF Cash case does not close at the end of the grace period, the family will lose eligibility for Non-TANF child care: ⇒ The WoRC Case Manager may refer the family for child care. ⇒ Upon referral, the CCR&R may open the family on TANF child care.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Absent Day Policies – Maintaining the Continuity of Care**

Continuity of Care Policies	Description & Requirements
Jury Duty – ***Maintain Parent's Eligibility***	A parent's eligibility for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be interrupted when they are called to jury duty. All of the following restrictions apply: ❑ The parent must be receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship when the jury selection occurs. ❑ There is a need for child care during jury duty. ❑ The parent must report the jury duty as soon as possible, but within 10 days. ❑ The parent's current employer shall verify that the parent can return to their job following jury duty. If jury duty extends for more than 30 days, the CCR&R shall assess changes due to the jury duty: ⇒ Verify the parent's continuing participation in the jury. ⇒ Verify the need for child care. ⇒ Verify that the employer is keeping the job open for the parent. ⇒ Prospect eligibility using the family's current circumstances. For example, the family's income may be lower due to jury duty. ⇒ Adjust the child care certification plan to manage the time committed to jury duty. ⇒ Income and co-payment adjustments must be managed prospectively.
Maternity Leave Not Covered, Unless . . .	Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are not available for normal maternity leave. However, one of the following policies may apply: ❑ Certified Enrollment; ❑ Hold-the-Slot; ❑ Medical Emergency; or ❑ Suspending a Case.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Absent Day Policies – Maintaining the Continuity of Care**

Continuity of Care Policies	Description & Requirements
Medical Appointments – ***Meet the Parent's Need for Child Care***	Parents who meet activity/work requirements may receive a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship when they leave work to attend a medical appointment. Additionally, if a medical appointment requires child care and is necessary to increase the parent's ability to work, a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may assist the parent with child care during the appointment. EXAMPLE: A parent is recovering from injuries sustained in a car accident. The initial 'medical emergency' has passed and the parent has returned to work. While the parent does meet the work requirement, they are not yet working full time because of physical limitations. Initially, the parent attends physical therapy sessions for two hours every morning before going to work. Subsequently, physical therapy sessions taper off and work hours increase. A Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship may be used during the physical therapy sessions.
Medical Emergency – ***Maintain Parent's Eligibility***	A parent's eligibility for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is jeopardized when they fail to meet their work requirement during temporary, unforeseen interruption due to a parent's or their child's medical emergency. All of the following restrictions apply: ❑ The parent must be receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship when the medical emergency occurs. ❑ There is a need for child care during the medical emergency. ❑ The medical emergency involves the parent or their child. ❑ The medical emergency must be unforeseen. ❑ The parent must report the medical emergency to the CCR&R within ten days of beginning of the medical emergency. Exceptions to this reporting requirement shall be considered on a case-by-case basis. ❑ A physician shall verify the parent is unable to care for the child(ren) during the medical emergency. ❑ The parent's current employer shall verify that the parent can return to their job following the medical emergency.

Continuity of Care Policies	Description & Requirements
	❑ Medical emergency Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarships are limited to three months. EXAMPLE: Maternity problems (not a normal pregnancy) may constitute a medical emergency: The CCR&R shall assess changes due to the medical emergency: ⇒ Request a physician's statement to verify the individual's condition. ⇒ Verify the need for child care. ⇒ Verify with the employer that the parent intends to return to work. ⇒ Prospect eligibility under the family's current circumstances. For example, the family's income may be lower due to the medical emergency. ⇒ Set up child care for the periods of time when the parent cannot care for her child(ren) because of her medical condition. ⇒ Use 'Medical Emergency' as the reason for care. ⇒ Issue a new child care certification plan to manage the medical emergency period (3 months, or less). ⇒ When the parent returns to work, re-determine eligibility. ⇒ If the medical emergency is managed retrospectively, income and co-payments cannot be changed retrospectively.
Refer Back to "Issuing the Child care Certification Plan"	Maintaining continuity of care may involve redefining the intent of the current child care certification plan or issuing a new child care certification plan. Refer back to Issuing the Child care Certification Plan as outlined in Section 6-3 for additional policies, which may be useful when setting up a new certification plan: ❑ Parent is Unavailable; ❑ Sleep Time; ❑ Split Shift; or ❑ Study Time.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Invoice & Payment Processes**

Supercedes: **Child Care 6-8 (7/1/03)**

References: **37.80.315-316, 37.80.502 ARM**

General Rule

The child care certification plan indicates the benefit available for approved activities. If additional care is needed, documentation must support claims. Child care scholarship payments are limited to actual daily attendance, within one-quarter hour, and must be for approved activities only within the limits of the child care certification plan. Sign-in/sign-out records must support claims, including corrections and adjustments.

Invoices expire 60 days after the last day of the calendar month in which the service was provided. Invoices and adjustments must be received by the CCR&R within this period in order to be paid.

If a certification plan is not completed until after the calendar month in which the child care is provided, the claim will be considered to be filed timely if a completed invoice is received by the CCR&R within 60 days after the invoice is sent to the provider.

> EXAMPLE: LUP applies to provide care July 15th and begins providing care. Background checks are completed August 7th and a certification plan for the period of time July 15th to Dec 15th is issued. The July invoice will expire Oct. 13th – 60 days after the invoice was sent to the provider. The August invoice will expire Oct. 30th – 60 days after the end of the month in which the care was provided.

Invoices are submitted to the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency for processing. In the future, licensed and registered providers in good standing will be able to enter invoice information on the Internet. Direct deposit is a prerequisite to Internet billing.

IRS W-9, AWACS & IRS 1099

Individuals and businesses receiving child care payments must submit an IRS W-9 form to the DPHHS Fiscal Bureau for Agency Wide Accounting Client System (AWACS) payment processing. Generally, IRS W-9 forms are forwarded to DPHHS Fiscal through the Child Care Licensor or the CCR&R. Put the CCUBS 'Person' or 'Organization' number on the IRS W-9 form. IRS W-9 address information must be kept up-to-date in AWACS to avoid payment delays.

NOTE: The tax ID number and the name indicated on the W-9 must match IRS records. If an individual, Jane Doe, is doing business under her personal social security number, she must list her personal name, not a pseudo business name, such as "Jumpin' Jane's Day Care," on the W-9 form. Payments are issued in the name listed. If there is no business account or business tax ID number, a bank may not cash the payment.

Providers who receive $600.00 or more in child care subsidies and other payments during the calendar year should receive a 1099 tax statement from the State of Montana. The deadline for mailing 1099s is January 31st. The State reports 1099 information to the United States Internal Revenue Service.

Legally Unregistered In-home (LUI) payments may not generate a 1099. LUI payments are issued directly to the parent who employs the LUI.

Scholarship Will Not Pay More Than Others Pay

In all cases, the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship will not pay more for services than non-scholarship parents pay for the same service. Child care provider policies must treat all families equally with regard to the following Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship policies. Providers must submit a copy of their written policies to the CCR&R to document these practices before scholarship payments will be approved under the following policies:

- Holidays;

- Certified Enrollment; and
- Hold-the-Slot.

Scholarship Will Not Pay Twice

In all situations, the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship will not pay twice for the same care. When a parent chooses to move to a new child care provider, the Child Care Scholarship follows the child. The parent is responsible for any notice or payment obligation to the previous child care provider.

EXAMPLE: Certified enrollment days are not available to the previous provider when a child moves to another child care setting. The benefit moves with the child and is available to the current child care provider.

Sign-in/Sign-out Records

All child care providers shall maintain current sign-in/sign-out records for each child receiving child care assistance and utilize them as follows:

- Each time the child enters or leaves the provider's care, the parent or other individual authorized to deliver or pick up the child shall initial or sign the sign-in/sign-out sheet. If a parent is not available to sign the child in or out, the parent may submit the child's schedule to the provider indicating the child's attendance and the alternate mode of transportation. The provider shall note the child's time-in and the child's time-out. The parent shall sign the next time the child is signed in or signed out.

  EXAMPLE: A parent may not be available to sign a child in if a school-age child walks to the child care facility. When the parent picks up the child, they shall sign for the time the child arrived and sign the child out.

- An electronic signature system may be used if it employs a unique and confidential identification process for individuals.

- Sign-in/sign-out records must indicate the child's name, the date, the hour, and the minute when the child enters and leaves the provider's care.
- The provider shall make sign-in/sign-out records available to child care resource and referral agency staff and state and local government health, safety or law enforcement representatives upon request.
- The provider shall keep sign-in/sign-out records for five years beyond the date of attendance.

A bus driver may sign children in or out.

Incomplete or inaccurate sign-in/sign out records may cause the delay or the denial of scholarship payment. The CCR&R may request sign/in/sign-out records to verify invoices if questions arise.

Actual Daily Attendance Supported by Sign-in/Sign-out Records

Invoices must reflect actual daily attendance and be supported by the child care certification plan, the parent's approved activity schedule, the child's school schedule, and by sign-in/sign-out records.

If child care is provided outside the parent's schedule of approved activities, the provider may make a personal arrangement with the parent. The provider shall not bill the State for care provided when the parent is not participating in approved activities.

Quarter Hour Billing
➢

In an effort to maintain consistency across the state, ECSB will use quarter (1/4) hour increments as a standard for billing purposes. While a provider's attendance records should reflect actual arrival and departure times as indicated by approved activities, total attendance hours may be rounded to the nearest quarter (1/4) hour when providers bill for care.

EXAMPLE: 5 hours, 35 minutes rounds down to 5.5 hours
5 hours, 40 minutes rounds up to 5.75 hours

⇒ **CCR&Rs should direct providers to bill for actual time the children were in care for the parent's approved activities.**

Accurate Invoices

Provider shall clearly note any billing exception on the comment lines provided on the invoice. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ❑ Certified Enrollment;
- ❑ Holiday;
- ❑ Hold-the-Slot;
- ❑ Early Release from School; and
- ❑ School Holiday (requiring full day of child care).

Timely Invoices

Timely claim filing is a prerequisite for payment:

- ❑ Invoices should be submitted to the CCR&R for processing within three business days following the child care service month.

- ❑ Invoices and any invoice corrections must be submitted to the CCR&R within 60 days of the end of the service month or within 60 days of the date the invoice is issued if the certification plan was issued in the month following the month of service. Generally, expired invoices are NOT eligible for payment.

Alternate Invoice Format
➢

Upon approval by the CCR&R, child care providers may use an alternate invoice. The CCR&R approval must be done before the alternate invoice is used.

Unexplained Absences

Child care providers are required to notify the CCR&R of unexplained absences (five or more consecutive days) and are asked to notify the CCR&R of irregular attendance within three working days.

➢ If the provider fails to notify the CCR&R after five or more consecutive days of unexplained absences, the CCR&R will not pay for child care during the time period after the 5th day of unexplained absence until a case closure notice period begins or the end of the certification plan, whichever is earliest. The provider may use CE days for the child's first five days of unexplained absences if the child is eligible for CE days.

When the provider notifies the CCR&R of a child's unexplained absence, the CCR&R shall attempt to contact the parent either at the parent's residence or at the parent's place of employment. After attempts to contact the parent by phone or mail fail, the CCR&R shall begin procedures to close the case.

- ⇒ Ten-Day case closure notice is sent to both the parent and to the provider.
- ⇒ Case note all attempts to contact the family.
- ⇒ In the case that the provider has charged CE days for any unexplained absences, the CCR&R may pay the first five unexplained absent days as Certified Enrollment days. Any days after the 5th unexplained absence day and prior to the ten-day case closure notice period will not be paid.
- ⇒ The CCR&R Eligibility Specialist will pay the ten-day closure period as regular scheduled days according to the certification plan.

Co-payment – Failure to Pay

When a parent fails to pay their co-payment, review Co-payment Requirements, as outlined in Section 6-4.

⇒ Request verification within ten days notifying the parent and provider.
⇒ If verification of payment (or satisfactory arrangement) is not received, close the child care scholarship.
⇒ Provide notice to the parent and provider ten days before child care scholarship closure.
⇒ The parent has until the closure date to verify that they have paid the required co-payment.
⇒ Case note.

Payment Address

If the payment address is not current, the payment will be sent by return mail back to DPHHS Fiscal. Anticipate a delay of one to three weeks while the payment is returned to the State, the correct address located, and the payment re-mailed. Providers may avoid payment delay by notifying and sending an updated W-9 before changing their address.

Change to Payment Address

Licensed & registered providers, LUPs, and parents who receive a payment must notify the local Child Care Resource and Referral agency when a change of address has occurred to ensure that payments are sent to the proper address. The provider or parent will be required to complete a W-9 form before information will be changed in CCUBS.

⇒ If the change of address is for a registered or licensed provider, the CCR&R must update the OG screen for current address and correct tax ID information.
⇒ If the change of address is for a LUP or parent, the CCR&R must update the PS screen for current address and correct tax ID information.
⇒ Write the respective OG or PS number on the top of the W-9 and forward the form to the DPHHS Fiscal Dept. For a parent who is

completing the W-9 to receive payments, write "Head of Household – No 1099" in the top-center of the W-9 form.

Batch Payments, Warrants, SORs, and EOBs

Invoices are batch processed for cost effectiveness. Child care providers serving several families generally receive one combined payment. CCUBS processes invoices and requests payment through AWACS around 1:00 p.m. on the following days:

- ❑ 5th business day of the month;
- ❑ Subsequent Tuesdays; and
- ❑ The last business day of the month.

Warrants (payments) come in an automated mailer format with a brief explanation. A payment advice is mailed to confirm each Direct Deposit. Later in the month, providers receive a detailed Statement of Remittance. Parents receive a similar statement for their family called an Explanation of Benefits.

Direct Deposit

Direct Deposit service for payments to providers is available.

1. The provider completes a 'Direct Deposit Sign-Up Form' (Standard Banking Form 1199A) at their bank. The provider should return the form to their CCR&R who will add the correct OG# or PS# on the right side of the form. (OG# for licensed or registered providers and PS# for LUP or HOH.)
2. Complete the 'Payee' (1) and 'Government Agency' (2) portions of the form using the DPHHS Fiscal Bureau address listed below.
3. The provider's bank provides the 'Financial Institution' (3) information, or a provider may want to securely attach a cancelled check in the financial information area. Deposit tickets will NOT be accepted because the routing information is sometimes different than the checks.

4. CCR&Rs will mail the completed Direct Deposit form to the following address:

DPHHS Fiscal – AWACS
111 North Sanders
PO Box 4210
Helena, MT 59604-4210

- ❑ After direct deposit arrangements are made, the first payment will still come in the mail. This allows DPHHS and the provider's bank to test the direct deposit arrangement without jeopardizing delivery of the payment.
- ❑ Each Direct Deposit requires two business days from the date the invoice is processed for electronic fund transfer (EFT) processing. Depending upon mail services, Direct Deposit is almost as timely as payment by mail.
- ❑ The Department will mail a confirmation of each Direct Deposit transaction to the provider. This will have a "settlement date." This is the date the EFT should be at your bank.
- ❑ If, after trying Direct Deposit, a provider wants to return to receiving payments by mail, contact the ECSB to change the payment method with an e-mail to the HHSCCUBSPayments@mt.gov mailbox.

Online Invoice Processing

In the future, CCUBS will have online invoice processing available. To use this feature a provider must have Internet access and Direct Deposit. Arrange for Direct Deposit before setting up online billing. To setup online billing, enter the CCUBS Provider Payment Information (CPPI) module through the Virtual Human Services Pavilion at http://vhsp.dphhs.state.mt.us/.

1. From the Pavilion, select the Human Service button. Then from the Human Services rotunda, choose the Child Care Resources kiosk. This leads you to child care information. Under the Provider

Section, click on CCUBS Provider Payment Information.

2. Print the security access request form and mail it to the address printed on the form. Once a provider has access, they can search for warrant status, child invoices, and submit invoices online.

Corrections

If inaccuracies result in an underpayment or overpayment, follow policies outlined in Corrections & Overpayments, as outlined in Section 6-9 of this manual.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Auditing & Investigations**

Supersedes: Child Care 6-8 (05/01/05)

References: 37.80.315-316, 37.80.502 ARM

General Rule

The department expects that child care certification plans will be authorized accurately, however, if a household or provider receives any amount of child care assistance to which they were not entitled, they shall repay all child care assistance issued inappropriately, regardless of whether the applicant, the recipient, or the department caused the overpayment. **The CCR&R must perform an investigation when it appears an invoice was paid or an invoice was billed inaccurately.**

Indicators to Initiate an Investigation

CCR&R Eligibility specialists shall review a provider's sign-in/sign-out records when questions of accuracy arise. The following situations are indicative that a provider's records need to be reviewed:

- ❑ Parent/provider dispute;
- ❑ Employee Report;
- ❑ Block Billing - no deviation in attendance;
- ❑ Billing above the certification plan without explanation or parent request;
- ❑ Varied schedule that does not vary; or
- ❑ Billing 5.5 or 5.75 hours per day, when the child is certified for full time care.

Steps to Complete an Investigation

If the attendance reported on the invoices appears to be inaccurate, the CCR&R must:

1. Request sign-in/sign-out records for the child or children in question.
2. Review attendance on a child-by-child basis. Compare hours billed to hours attended. Also compare hours attended to hours authorized. The CCR&R shall start a spreadsheet and/or binder/file to keep all of the documents in. A example is located on pg 4 of this section.
3. If the attendance reported on the sign-in/sign-out records is not

accurate, 10% of the provider's Best Beginnings scholarship cases shall be reviewed for one month. Establish a 10% review sample.

4. If a pattern of inaccurate billing exists, review the entire roster of Best Beginnings Scholarship children at the facility to establish an initial over-payment amount.
5. Share findings with provider:
    a. Make copies of all findings for provider to review;
    b. Allow 30 days for the provider to review documents;
    c. When a 30-day time frame doesn't work for the provider, the CCR&R may negotiate on a case-by-case basis, an amicable time frame for the provider to review findings; and
    d. Set an appointment to meet with the provider in person about the situation.
6. Make any adjustments that are necessary based on additional or corrected information submitted by the provider.
7. Set up overpayment as outlined in Section 6-9.

Providers must Receive an Opportunity to Correct Inaccuracies

An investigation means the entire review of records for one provider during the time period the CCR&R has chosen to examine.

If a problem of inaccurate billing is identified, the CCR&R should immediately begin providing technical assistance to the provider in order to stop continuous errors from occurring.

The CCR&R must allow the provider an opportunity to correct inaccuracies and provide technical assistance to the provider before initiating a subsequent investigation of corrective action. Technical assistance should include the correct method of completing whatever the investigation is in reference to. Technical assistance may include the some or all of the following:

- Training the provider on keeping accurate sign-in/sign-out records;
- Training the provider to bill for approved activities in which the family is eligible;
- Training the provider to bill on a quarter hour basis; and
- Explaining to the provider what a willful action is and the penalties

that are accessed with such action.

If new information is obtained by the CCR&R while the provider is in the process of an investigation, this information must be included in the original investigation. A new investigation must not begin until the original investigation is completed and the CCR&R has provided the appropriate technical assistance.

An investigation may result in reviewing several months of invoices and several scholarship families. If the CCR&R is completing an investigation of a provider, the CCR&R must complete the entire process before issuing any results, whether these results are determined to be an overpayment, over claim, or underpayment.

Audit Invoices at the Recertification Review

At each recertification, the CCR&R Eligibility specialist shall compare the previous month's invoices to the Explanation of Benefits, to the parent's wage stubs, work schedules, school schedules, etc. to ensure billing accuracy.

Auditing Internet Invoicing & Attendance

CCR&Rs shall audit 100% of a provider's Internet invoices for the first three months.

After monitoring a provider's initial online invoice, CCR&Rs shall audit 20% of Internet invoices submitted each month in their district.

CCR&Rs shall request sign-in/sign-out records from providers and look for inaccuracies, such as, but not limited to, the following:

- ❑ Block Billing - no deviation in attendance;
- ❑ Billing above the certification plan; and
- ❑ Varied schedule that does not vary.

Once a billing error is identified, the CCR&R Eligibility specialist shall research and pursue the entire correction.

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DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR

ROBERT WYNIA, M.D.
DIRECTOR

STATE OF MONTANA

www.dphhs.state.mt.us

PO Box 4210
HELENA, MT 59604-4210

June 14, 2005

TO: Child Care Manual Holders

FROM: Anne Carpenter
DPHHS ECSB

SUBJECT: Bulletin #4 - Child Care Manual
Place this bulletin at the beginning of section 6-9 in the Child Care Manual. This supercedes Section 6-9 p. 7 of 9.

Section: Child Care Manual Section 6-9
Subject: Corrections & Overpayments
Effective Date: May 1, 2005

Update the address for the DPHHS Fiscal - A/R to:

DPHHS Fiscal – A/R
PO Box 4210
Helena MT 59604-4210

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Corrections & Overpayments**

Supercedes: **Child Care 6-9 (5/01/05)**

References: **37.80.315-316, 37.80.502 ARM**

General Rule

If an error is made when determining eligibility or paying child care for authorized activities, rework the case making corrections, as it should have been managed had the error not occurred. The correction usually results in an underpayment or an overpayment. Once an error is identified, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist shall research and pursue the entire correction.

Overpayments are evaluated to determine if a willful action resulted in the overpayment. In addition, in limited situations, overpayments due to agency error may not be pursued in limited circumstances identified below, under 'Agency Error.'

CCUBS does not interface with DPHHS Accounts Receivable. CCR&R Eligibility Specialists adjust CCUBS invoices and notify A/R of all overpayments, that are not completed through invoice reduction, with the electronic form, 'AR-110C Form.doc.'

Underpayments

If a family or provider has not received the amount due to them, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist may correct the invoice on CCUBS and issue the additional payment.

⇒ Case note the circumstances and the calculation of the underpayment

Penalties for a Willful Action

If an overpayment is due to a willful action, the parent or provider is subject to an assessment. On the third offense, the parent or provider loses the right to participate in any of the Best Beginnings Child Care Programs.

When a provider or a parent receives child care assistance in excess of the amount to which the provider or parent is entitled due to a willful action of the provider or parent, the department may pursue criminal charges against the provider or parent. Criminal prosecution may be pursued in addition to recovery of the overpayment.

A willful action includes but is not limited to the making of false or misleading statements, a misrepresentation, or the concealment or withholding of facts or information.

If a willful action is an overclaim, the following will occur:

The first willful overclaim (Strike 1) will result in:

- An assessment of 10% of the amount actually due being added to the amount of repayment due if an overpayment has already been made to the claimant;
- If an overclaim is discovered before payment is made, deduction of 10% of the amount due from the amount paid to the claimant; and
- If the provider is responsible, the loss of web invoicing privileges for six months and the imposition of the requirement that copies of sign-in/sign-out sheets must be submitted with invoices for the following three months.

The second willful overclaim (Strike 2) will result in:

- An assessment of 25% of the amount actually due being either added to the amount of repayment due to the department or deducted from the amount of payment due to the claimant, depending upon whether payment to the claimant has already been made;
- If the provider is responsible for the overclaim, the loss of web invoicing privileges permanently and imposition of the requirement that the provider must submit copies of sign-in/sign-out sheets with invoices for the following six months.

The third willful overclaim (Strike 3) will result in the household or provider responsible being ineligible to participate in the child care development fund child care assistance, grant, and quality child care programs for seven years.

The CCR&R should complete the IPV Tracking spreadsheet and e-mail it as an attachment to, HHSCCUBSPayments@mt.gov, when a parent or provider has been determined to have a 1st , 2nd or 3rd willful action.

Agency Error Results in Overpayment Sent Directly to Parent

In limited situations, when scholarship payments are sent directly to the parent and an agency error results in overpayment, the Department **does not collect an overpayment**. All of the following criteria must apply:

- ❑ Payment is made directly to the parent, not to the provider; and
- ❑ The Department or CCR&R error causes the overpayment; and
- ❑ The overpayment is less than 150% of the monthly benefit.
  NOTE: If the overpayment period extends beyond three months and is over 150% of the monthly benefit, the recovery period shall be limited to three months.

⇒ When an overpayment meets the criteria for non-collection, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist shall calculate the amount of the overpayment, case note, and e-mail the overpayment amount to the ECSB Fiscal Officer.

Calculating an Over Claim or an Overpayment

An adjustment is calculated by re-determining eligibility or attendance with the new information. The difference in the amount of child care scholarship issued under the error and the amount of child care scholarship which should have been issued, becomes the amount of the adjustment.

If the family loses eligibility, the period used to calculate the overpayment begins when the family first loses eligibility. All subsequent payments are subject to overpayment. Eligibility specialists cannot assume a participant might have reported periods of basic eligibility requirements (e.g. employment or unemployment) following the initial loss of eligibility.

EXAMPLE: A parent receives a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship in November while they are meeting the work requirement. The parent loses their job in December and does not report to the CCR&R. The gap in employment lasts more than ten days. The parent works in January and February, but not in March. In April, they are employed again. None of the employment changes are reported to the CCR&R until re-certification in May. The parent initially lost eligibility in December. The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is subject to overpayment from December through

May. The eligibility specialist may not assume the family was eligible for a child care scholarship had they reported the changes timely.

EXAMPLE: A woman applies for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, claiming the father is separated and not contributing to the family. Based on her income alone, she qualifies for a scholarship of $300 per month. Two months later, it is determined that the father had been living with the family all along. His income would have made the family ineligible from the start. A $600 overpayment has occurred over two months.

EXAMPLE: A man applies for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship and neglects to report receipt of a disability payment. The payment would have reduced his Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship by $75 per month. The oversight is discovered three months later. He accumulates a $225 overpayment, which he elects to pay in four installments. He continues to be eligible for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship while he makes payments to DPHHS.

Creating Provider Overpayments

A provider overpayment may be created when an invoice is adjusted.

- ❑ Refer to the 'CCUBS Invoice Adjustment.doc' flow chart for help setting up provider overpayments.
- ❑ Subsequent payments are reduced to collect the overpayment.
- ⇒ Make a case note regarding the overpayment.
- ⇒ Determine whether the overpayment was made as a willful action and should have an additional penalty attached to it.
- ⇒ If the provider will be making a direct payment, or is in-active in CCUBS, use the electronic form, 'AR-110C Form.doc', to notify Accounts Receivable of the overpayment.

NOTE: If the repayment is completed entirely through invoice adjustment(s), there is no need to use the electronic form, 'AR-110C Form.doc', to notify Accounts Receivable of the overpayment.

➢ **NOTE: In an effort to avoid establishing duplicate payments, eligibility workers should NOT send copies of the AR-110 form when mailing payments. The eligibility specialist should send the payment with a memo from their agency that states the clients full account number, name of the client, and the worker's name who is mailing the payment.**

Household Overpayments

A household overpayment may be created when an invoice is adjusted.

- ⇒ Make a case note regarding the overpayment.
- ⇒ Use the electronic form, ' AR-110C Form.doc', to notify Accounts Receivable of these overpayments.
- ⇒ CCR&R worker will credit repayments to the parent's account on the CCUBS Case Event Summary screen, Overpayments tab, and forward the repayment to DPHHS Accounts Receivable. At no time should checks be held at the CCR&R.

  NOTE: The parent writes the payment out to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (MT DPHHS).

➢ A parent who is not making monthly payments on outstanding child care overpayments is not eligible for further child care assistance. Any parent who misses a payment as required by the terms of an overpayment repayment agreement or order and who does not become fully current in making all payments required under the agreement or order within the times described below will not be eligible to receive child are assistance until the parent has become fully current in making all payments required under the agreement or order, or unless the Department has agreed to modify the payment schedule under the repayment agreement or order.

First missed payment. Unless the Department has agreed to a modified repayment schedule, a parent will cease being eligible to receive child care assistance if the parent has not become fully current in making all required payments on or before the ninetieth (90th) day following of the first missed payment. The period of ineligibility will begin on the ninetieth day following the first missed payment and will end when the parent has become fully current in making all payments required under the repayment agreement or order.

Second missed payment. Unless the Department has agreed to a modified repayment schedule, a parent will cease being eligible to receive child care assistance if the parent has not become fully current in making all required payments on or before the sixtieth (60th) day following of the second missed payment. The period of ineligibility will begin on the sixtieth day following the second missed payment and will end when the parent has become fully current in making all payments required under the repayment agreement or order.

Third missed payment. Unless the Department has agreed to a modified repayment schedule, a parent will cease being eligible to receive child care assistance if the parent has not become fully current in making all required payments on or before the thirtieth (30th) day following of the third missed payment. The period of ineligibility will begin on the thirtieth day following the third missed payment and will end when the parent has become fully current in making all payments required under the repayment agreement or order.

More than three missed payments. Unless the Department has agreed to a modified repayment schedule, a parent will cease being eligible to receive child care assistance when the parent has missed more than three payments, and the parent will not be eligible to receive further child care assistance until the parent has become fully current in making all payments required under the repayment agreement or order.

Inactive Overpayments

Inactive overpayments, where the provider or the household is not active on CCUBS, should be transferred to Accounts Receivable.

- ⇒ Make an effort to locate the current address of the inactive household or inactive provider.
- ⇒ Use the electronic form, ' AR-110C Form.doc ', to notify Accounts Receivable of these overpayments.

Negotiating a Repayment

Generally, a repayment period should not exceed one year. Suggested minimum repayment amount is 10% of the total repayment. If the total

Amount

repayment is less than $100, a minimum $10 payment applies. If there is no response from attempts to negotiate a repayment agreement, enter the amount suggested. Additionally,

- notify ECSB of repayment agreements exceeding one year; and
- notify ECSB of overpayments totaling $1,000 or more.

Overpayment Process

1. Calculate the overpayment.
2. Determine whether the overpayment was a result of a willful action.
3. If the overpayment was a result of a willful action, assess and add the correct monetary penalty.
4. Contact the Parent or Provider to negotiate a repayment agreement:

⇒ Send a cover letter to the provider or parent explaining the following points:

- Indicate the amount of the repayment.
- Explain why the overpayment occurred.

- Suggest a repayment schedule (which will be used if the individual does not reply).
- Encourage the provider or parent to complete and return the enclosed Repayment Agreement form (DPHHS-HCS/CC-121) to the CCR&R.
- Repayment checks are made out to DPHHS.
- CCR&R worker will record the payment in CCUBS.
- Identify the payment as 'child care' and add the SSN, so A/R applies the payment correctly.
- Include a copy of the A/R-110C (with the first payment only).
- Repayments are delivered to the CCR&R who records the payment on CCUBS and forwards the payment on to DPHHS Fiscal.

DPHHS Fiscal – A/R
PO Box 4210
Helena, MT 59604-4210

5. Release the adjusted invoice(s) on CCUBS, and complete the overpayment screen information.

6. Make a case note of the circumstances and the calculation of the overpayment.
7. Keep a file of all overpayment transactions.

Accounts Receivable

DPHHS Accounts Receivable unit manages collections for the department:

1. A/R establishes a collection account using the information provided on the AR-110C form.
2. When payments are not received, A/R sends up to three collection letters.
3. When a balance remains, A/R forwards the account to the Department of Revenue Tax Offset system. Tax Offset monitors all State payments, in attempt to collect the debt. An account balance may be moved to Tax Offset at any time. All unpaid balances are forwarded to Tax Offset before tax season.

Field	Accounts Receivable System Transaction Input Form (AR-110) Instructions
Date	This field should contain the date the form is being completed. (YYYYMMDD) e.g. 20030725
New Account	**X = Yes**, unless you know this specific overpayment account already exists on A/R.
Account	This field contains the clients SSN# followed by the claim number (01, 02, etc.) after that is the county number in which the child care scholarship was received (07 for Cascade County, 25 for Lewis & Clark County, etc.) and the end is the Recovery Type and Category Code (BK). **1st 9 digits** - Tax ID number (SSN or Tax ID#) **Next 2 Digits – 01 -** Claim number (A/R will correct this if needed.) **Next 2 Digits** - County number **Second to the Last Digit – B** (A/R code) & **Last Digit – K** – (child care recovery)
Name, Last & First	This field should contain the client's name with no punctuation.
Address **City, State Zip**	This field should contain the client's street address plus apartment number, etc. with no punctuation. Include Zip+4, if known.
CO	This field contains the county number contained in the account number.
Monthly Payment Due	This field should contain the amount the client is expected to pay each month.

Frequency	**M** = Monthly
Letter	This field should contain X yes for letters to be sent when failing to make payments.
Tax Offset	This field should contain X yes to tax offset (Please note the client will be sent to tax offset ONLY if they fail to make payments and receive 3 letters).
CCUBS Case #	Used to enter payments made to A/R on the CCUBS system.
Agreement Start Date:	This field should contain the date the client is to begin repaying the overpayment. (YYYYMMDD)
Repayment Period Start Date: End Date:	This field should contain the dates of service that contributed to the overpayment. (YYYYMMDD)
A/R Amount	This field should contain the total amount of the overpayment. The plus sign you see beside this is for data entry purposes.
CCUBS Provider #	Used to enter payments made to A/R on CCUBS system.
CCR&R Eligibility Specialist Telephone	Enter the name and telephone number of the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist working with the provider overpayment.
Notes	Anything relevant to the collection process.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Serving the Family**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Table of Eligibility Related Forms**

Supersedes: **Child Care Manual 6-10 (5/01/05)**

References: **52-2-701 - 704 & 52-2-711 - 713 MCA**
Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 ARM 45
CFR Part 98.20 – 47

Ordering Eligibility Related Forms

Child Care Resource and Referral agencies order eligibility related forms and publications on a FORMS REQUISITION form, DPHHS-GS-003B. CCR&Rs use their respective **location code** at the top of the 'GS-003B form:

Location	CCR&R	Location Code
Billings	District VII HRDC	456
Bozeman	Child Care Connections	416
Butte	Butte 4C's	447
Glasgow	Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc.	453
Glendive	DEAP Child Care Resource and Referral	411
Havre	District IV HRDC – Child Care Link	421
Great Falls	Family Connections	407
Helena	Child Care Partnerships	425
Kalispell	The Nurturing Center	415
Miles City	DEAP Child Care Resource and Referral	409
Missoula	Child Care Resources	432
Lewistown	District VI HRDC – Child Care Link	414

DPHHS Internal Support
111 Sanders, Room 8
PO Box 4210
Helena, MT 59604
(406) 444-3912

NOTE: If ordering QAD forms at the same time, the Child Care Licensing Program requests that QAD form orders be sent to the Child Care Licensing

Program Assistance, who will forward the order to the DPHHS Internal Support (Refer to 6-13 for personnel contact information):

Child Care Licensing Program Assistanct
DPHHS Child Care Licensing Program
2401 Colonial Dr.
PO Box 202953
Helena, MT 59620-2953
Office: 444-2012
FAX: 444-1742

FORM #	DESCRIPTION	USE
AR-110 *(electronic Word form)*	Accounts Receivable System Transaction Input Form is e-mailed to DPHHS Accounts Receivable when setting up overpayments. This form is used to inform A/R of all child care overpayments, unless it is a one-time adjustment on a provider's invoice. *This form is available from Randy Haight, ECSB.*	Overpayments
Child Care Need Form	The Child Care Need Form is used to gather family demographic and child care preference information for the child care referral process. *This form is available from the Montana CCR&R Network Office, in coordination with NACCRRAware support.*	Referrals for Families
CPS Child Care Referral *(electronic Word form)*	CFSD Child Care Referral is used by social workers to make a CPS child care referral to the CCR&R for the CCUBS system. *This form is available from Randy Haight, ECSB.*	*CPS child care referrals.*
DPHHS-HCS/CC-009	Child Care Scholarships brochure explains the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program to potential applicants.	*As needed*
DPHHS-HCS/CC-010	Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Application form is used for Best Beginnings Child Care	Presumptive Eligibility Eligibility

FORM #	DESCRIPTION	USE
	Scholarship program applicants.	Annual Re-certification
DPHHS-HCS/CC-011	Release of Information/Request for Verification form is used to verify participant employment schedules and wages.	Eligibility Annual Re-certification
DPHHS-HCS/CC-012	Request Grace Period for Child Care Assistance form is used for families who report within 10 days when they fall below the minimum work requirement.	*As requested*
DPHHS-HCS/CC-015	Child Care Service Plan Information form gathers information from the parent and the provider to establish a child care certification plan.	Presumptive Eligibility Eligibility Annual Re-certification
DPHHS-HCS/CC-016	Change Report Form provides families with a tool to keep the CCR&R informed of relevant changes. If families notify the CCR&R of changes via telephone, send this form to obtain written verification of the change. (While this change report form is preferred, policy simply requires written verification for changes.)	*Inform families at the following times:* Eligibility Annual Re-certification
DPHHS-HCS/CC-017	Family's Rights & Responsibilities informs families of program requirements and options. The Rights & Responsibilities information is incorporated with the child care scholarship application.	TANF Families
DPHHS-HCS/CC-018	Child Care Provider's Rights & Responsibilities informs providers of program requirements. This form is not required in individual case files.	Annually LUP Info Packet

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Serving the Family

Subject:
Table of Eligibility Related Forms

FORM #	DESCRIPTION	USE
DPHHS-HCS/CC-019	Child Care Program – Notice of Requirement to Cooperate & Right to Claim Good Cause for Refusal to Cooperate in Child Support Enforcement is used when determining eligibility.	*Inform families at the following times:* Eligibility Annual Re-certification
DPHHS-HCS/CC-077	Legally Unregistered Provider (LUP) Program Release of Information Criminal/Protective Service Background Checks allows DPHHS to request background checks on applicants and household members.	LUP/LUI Applicants
DPHHS-HCS/CC-078	LUP Child/Adult Protective Services Record Check is used for LUP/LUI applicants and household members.	LUP/LUI Applicants
DPHHS-HCS/CC-079	LUP Criminal History Record Check is used for LUP/LUI applicants and household members.	LUP/LUI Applicants
DPHHS-HCS/CC-080	LUP/LUI Immunization Waiver	LUP/LUI Applicants
DPHHS-HCS/CC-087	LUP/In-Home Care Application for State Payment Only is the LUP/Parent application.	LUP/LUI Applicants
DPHHS-HCS/CC-088	Unregistered Provider/ In home Medication Administration Attestation	LUP/LUI Applicants
DPHHS-HCS/CC-089	Medication Administration form	LUP/LUI Applicants
DPHHS-HCS/CC-090	Medication Administration log	LUP/LUI Applicants
DPHHS-HCS/CC-091	Medication Error/ Incident Report	LUP/LUI Applicants
DPHHS-HCS/CC-092	Over-the-Counter Medication Authorization	LUP/LUI Applicants

FORM #	DESCRIPTION	USE
DPHHS-HCS/CC-121	Repayment Agreement is the form used by the CCR&R with either a parent or provider to set up a repayment plan for an overpayment.	*As needed*
DPHHS-HCS/CC-122	Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Program informational booklet contains policies and guidelines for child care providers.	All Providers
DPHHS-HCS/CC-123	HIPAA Child Care Information Guide	*As needed*
DPHHS-HCS/CC-124	What is an LUP? is an informational document used in the LUP packets.	LUP/LUI Applicants
DPHHS-HCS/CC-127	LUP/LUI Statement of Health is required of the applicant.	LUP/LUI Applicants
DPHHS-HSC/CC-131	Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Application –TANF	TANF applicants
DPHHS-HCS/CC-140	Special Needs Subsidy Rating Scale is used by the CCR&R Early Childhood Specialist to evaluate whether an increased scholarship reimbursement rate is needed to care for a child with special needs.	CCR&R Early Childhood Specialist Annual Re-certification
DPHHS-HCS/CC-141	Montana Individual Child Care Plan is to provide a description of the special skills or abilities a child care provider will need in order to fully include a child in typical routines and activities.	CCR&R Early Childhood Specialist Annual Re-certification
DPHHS-HCS/CC-142	Special Needs Subsidy Recertification Form is used to determine whether there is a change in the scholarship reimbursement rate for a child with special needs.	CCR&R Early Childhood Specialist Annual Re-certification
DPHHS-HCS/CC-143	The Americans with Disabilities Act & Child Care brochure	*As needed*

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Serving the Family

Subject:
Table of Eligibility Related Forms

FORM #	DESCRIPTION	USE
DPHHS-HCS/CC-144	Special Needs Scholarship Parent Consent	CCR&R Early Childhood specialist
DPHHS-HCS-051	Child Care assistance will not start until you contact your local Child care Resource and Referral Agency form is used by OPA Eligibility Case Managers to refer FAIM families to CCR&Rs. This form is not a requirement for a child care scholarship and is not required in the family's case file. However, a family is not eligible for child care until they contact their CCR&R. Since OPA uses this form, CCR&Rs do not need to order this form.	*OPA uses this form to refer families to CCR&R*
DPHHS-HCS-101	Authorization to Release Information is used to assist with general eligibility determination for Child Care and TANF programs. An applicant's authorization is not a condition of eligibility. If authorization is not granted, the applicant must provide all the verification required to determine eligibility.	Presumptive Eligibility Eligibility Annual Re-certification
DPHHS-HCS-102	One Time Only Authorization to Release Information is used for a specific, short-term need to share information, which is not identified on the '101' form. For example, a physician's statement regarding an individual's disability and their inability to care for their children.	*As needed*
DPHHS-HCS-103	Inter-Agency Authorization to Release Information is used for ongoing information sharing for case management. CCR&Rs are not likely to need this form often.	*As needed*

Montana Department of
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FORM #	DESCRIPTION	USE
DPHHS-OM-300B	Non-DPHHS Employee/System Access File Request is used for CCR&R Eligibility Specialists who require access to CCUBS & CAPS. The Eligibility Specialist's e-mail address will be added to the State Outlook address book and included on the 'HHS CCR&R Worker' list.	*Used to gain or terminate State computer system access for CCR&R employee*
QAD/CCL-040A	Change of Name/Address/Ages for [Provider] Registration Certificate . . . form is not yet available through DPHHS supply. Providers use this QAD form to inform their licensor.	Informs providers that they need to keep their address current in order to prevent payment problems
UNPAM119	Montana School Guidelines for the Identification and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect 2204-2005	This publication contains information to assist personnel in identifying, reporting, and responding to the abused and neglected children with whom they have contact.

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR

ROBERT WYNIA, M.D.
DIRECTOR

STATE OF MONTANA

www.dphhs.state.mt.us

PO Box 4210
HELENA, MT 59604-4210

June 14, 2005

TO: Child Care Manual Holders

FROM: Anne Carpenter
DPHHS ECSB

SUBJECT: Bulletin #5 - Child Care Manual
Place this bulletin at the beginning of section 6-13 in the Child Care Manual. This supercedes Section 6-13 p. 2 of 21.

Section: Child Care Manual Section 6-13
Subject: Resources for CCR&R Eligibility Specialists
Effective Date: May 1, 2005

Update the e-mail address for Tina Columbus to: tcolumbus@mt.gov

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Serving the Family

Subject:
Resources for CCR&R Eligibility Specialists

Accounts Receivable 8
Address Change: CCR&R 8
Address Change: Licensed/Registered Provider 8
Address Change: LUP 9
CCR&R Contract Monitors 9
Computer Access: Deleting Access 9
Computer Access: Requesting or Changing Access 10
Computer Help: NACCRRAware 10
Computer Help: Passwords, Connecting to State Systems, Hardware, & Software 10
Computer Help: Within CCUBS, CAPS & TEAMS 11
Computer: Security 12
Conference Calls 13
Eligibility Policy 13
E-mail List: HHS CCR&R Workers 13
Employee Name Change 13
Equipment: Disposal of Equipment Purchased under ECSB Contract 14
Equipment: State Surplus Property 14
Forms 15
IRS W-9 Updates & IRS 1099 Reports 15
Legally Unregistered Providers 17
Payment: Amounts Withheld from Warrants 17
Payment: Direct Deposit 17
Payment: Stale Dated Warrants 19
Payment: Where is the Payment? 19
Provider Lists 20
Provider Star Rating 20
Question & Answer Procedure 20
Special Needs Subsidy Rate 20
Travel ID Card 22
Travel Policies & Lodging Rates 22
Waiting List Policy Exceptions 22

Child Care Unit - Early Childhood Services Bureau				
Jamie Palagi	Bureau Chief	jpalagi@mt.gov	444-1828	DPHHS – ECSB 111 N Jackson PO Box 202925 Helena, MT 59620-2925 Fax: 444-2547
Patti Russ	Child Care Unit Supervisor	pruss@mt.gov	444-0309	
Melody Olson	CCUBS Program Specialist	molson@mt.gov	444-1839	
Chris Hettinger	Fiscal Officer	chettinger@mt.gov	444-2803	
Anne Carpenter	CCR&R & Policy Program Specialist	annearpenter@mt.gov	444-3657	
Renne't Sarbu	Child Care Contract Specialist	resarbu@mt.gov	444-5925	
vacant	LUP & ECSB Program Coordinator		444-9120	
Lisa Murphy	Best Beginnings Program Specialist	limurphy@mt.gov	444-1400	
vacant	HCSD Receptionist		444-1788	
Linda Kjorstad	Best Beginnings Program Officer	lkjorstad@mt.gov	657-2067 670-8265	MSU-Billings Montana Center #132 1500 North University Dr Billings, MT 59101-0298 Fax: 657-2055

ECSB Contractors				
Linda Tracy	MCCR&R Network Executive Director	ltracy@montanachildcare.com	541-1028	MCCR&R Network 127 East Main #217 Missoula, MT 59802 FAX: 541-9028
Melanie Jeffs	MCCR&R Network NACCRRA ware	mjeffs@montanachildcare.com	541-9029	
Karen Martin	Statewide Inclusion Coordinator	karen.martin@ruralinstitute.umt.edu	1-800-235-4122 243-6300	Child Care plus+ 634 Eddy Ave. Missoula, MT 59812 Fax: 243-4730 www.ruralinstitute.umt.edu

Child Care Licensing Program				
Becky Fleming-Siebenaler	Child Care Licensing Supervisor	bfleming@mt.gov	444-7770	BOI Building, 2nd Floor 2401 Colonial Dr. PO Box 202953 Helena, MT 59620-2953 FAX: 444-1742
Suzi Graveley	Child Care Licensing Program Assistant	sgraveley@mt.gov	444-2012	
Pat Carver	Child Care Licensing Administrative Support	pcarver@mt.gov	444-9460	

Computer & Equipment Related Contacts				
Northrop Grumman Help Desk *(CCUBS, CAPS)*		HHSNGCHelpDesk@mt.gov	(800) 285-2361 444-4125	BOI Building, 1st Floor 2401 Colonial Drive Helena, MT 59601 Fax: 449-3981
DPHHS Technology Services Help Desk *(Passwords, connectivity)*		dphhstech@mt.gov	444-9500	www.dphhs.mt.gov/tsc/
Information Technology Services Policies			http://www.mt.gov/itsd/policy/enterprise.asp	
Dave Johnson	DPHHS Technology Services	dajohnson@mt.gov	444-1670	PO Box 4210 Helena, MT 59604 Fax: 444-7358
	DPHHS Equipment Surplus Manager		444-0518	Cogswell A-112 1400 Broadway PO Box 4210 Helena, MT 59604 Fax: 444-2547

State Payment Contacts				
DPHHS Fiscal Tech	DPHHS Fiscal - AWACS, W-9s, Direct Deposit		444-5932	DPHHS Fiscal 111 North Sanders Rooms 105 and 108 PO Box 4210 Helena, MT 59604 Fax: 444-9763
Jami Templin	DPHHS Fiscal – Accounts Receivable	jtemplin@mt.gov	444-4061	
Tax Offset Collections		Customer Service: 444-6900		Department of Revenue PO Box 5805 Helena, MT 59604-5805 Fax: 444-1505

Other Resources				
Lee Davis	DPHHS Internal Support	ldavis2@mt.gov	444-3912	DPHHS Internal Support 111 Sanders, Room 8 PO Box 4210 Helena, MT 59604

Child Abuse and Neglect	**1-866-820-KIDS (5437)** If the child is in immediate danger, call 911 or the local law enforcement agency.
Child Support Enforcement Central Office	(406) 444-9855 1-800-346-KIDS (In Montana) (406) 444-1370 FAX http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/about_us/divisions/child_support_enforcement/child_support_enforcement.htm Payment Information: https://app.www.mt.gov/csed/index.html
DPHHS Child Care Resource Directory on the Virtual Human Services Pavilion	http://vhsp.dphhs.mt.gov/dph_r2.htm
DPHHS Fair Hearing Office	DPHHS Fair Hearing Officer P.O. Box 202953 Helena, MT 59620-2953 (406) 444-2470 Office (406) 444-3980 FAX
Internal Revenue Service Forms & Publications	http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html

Montana Community Development Corporation	http://mtcdc.org (406) 728-9234
Montana Early Childhood Project	http://www.montana.edu/ecp/ 1-800-213-6310
Telephone Directories on the Web (USA)	http://www.infobel.com/teldir/teldir.asp?page=/eng/name/us
Travel Policies for Contractors & Employees	http://www.mt.gov/doa/travel/index.htm
US Postal Service Zip Code Lookup	http://www.usps.com/zip4/

Accounts Receivable	If a parent or provider has an overpayment and a repayment is needed, an account must be established at DPHHS Accounts Receivable. Repayments are credited to the account on CCUBS and forwarded on to DPHHS accounts receivable. *Note: If a provider overpayment can be adjusted on a subsequent invoice and there is no need to make a payment directly to DPHHS, there is no need to set up an account with DPHHS Accounts Receivable.* **E-mail AR-110 form and mail payments to DPHHS Fiscal-Accounts Receivable.**
Address Change: CCR&R	CCR&R address and contact information is published in several locations throughout the DPHHS Human and Community Services Division. The new address will be forwarded to the following entities/locations: ❑ CCDF State Plan ❑ CCR&R Address List w/Map – ECSB ❑ CCUBS (each CCR&R staff member's address) ❑ Child and Adult Care Food Program - ECSB ❑ Child Care Interested Person's list, for rule changes etc. - ECSB ❑ Child Care Licensing Bureau Central Office - QAD ❑ Child Care Scholarships Brochure – ECSB ❑ DPHHS Web Pages ❑ Mailing Labels - ECSB ❑ Public Assistance Bureau referral form- HCSD ❑ Virtual Human Services Pavilion (via CCUBS) **E-mail ECSB Program Coordinator.**
Address Change: Licensed/Registered Provider	Child care providers must change their address information through their DPHHS QAD Licensor. This may involve a change in physical address, mailing address and/or AWACS (payment) address. If the provider's AWACS information is incorrect, there will be a significant delay in receiving payments. The warrant will eventually be returned to sender: DPHHS Fiscal in Helena. The payment may be mailed again, after the correct address is identified. The QAD Child Care Licensing Program provides a form for the purpose of reporting provider address updates. CCR&Rs may find it useful to have this form

	available in their agency. **Contact Child Care Licensing Program Assistant.**
Address Change: LUP	Child care providers must change their address information through their CCR&R. This may involve a change in physical address, mailing address and/or AWACS (payment) address. If the AWACS information is incorrect, providers will experience a significant delay in receiving payments. The warrant will eventually be returned to sender, DPHHS Fiscal in Helena. Fiscal may mail the payment, after the correct address is identified. ❑ Verify the AWACS address attachment. ❑ Verify the AWACS address.
CCR&R Contract Monitors	**Contact CCR&R & Policy Program Specialist.**
Computer Access: Deleting Access	Removing System Access: 1. Use NON-DPHHS EMPLOYEE SYSTEM/ACCESS REQUEST DPHHS-OM-300B **(2/03)**. The CCR&R supervisor signs this form. 2. Request that the State delete the user's logon ID and remove access to each State system, e.g. CCUBS, Outlook, and/or CAPS 3. Send the access request form to the ECSB Program Coordinator. **NOTE: Remove the employee's access immediately upon termination.** DPHHS policy does not allow an employee's access to remain open while a replacement is hired. The terminating employee's C# must be suspended immediately. **Fax system access request form to ECSB Program Coordinator.**

Computer Access: Requesting or Changing Access	System Access for a New Eligibility Specialist: 1. Use the NON-DPHHS EMPLOYEE SYSTEM/ACCESS REQUEST form, DPHHS-OM-300B **(2/03)**. CCR&Rs may want to initiate the access request during the hiring process. The CCR&R supervisor signs this form. While some State system users fill out the NETWORK ACCESS REQUEST form, DPHHS-OTD-004, this is not necessary for any CCR&R locations. 2. Use the employee's work address, telephone number, and e-mail address. 3. Request to create a logon ID, unless they already have a logon ID or 'c#'. 4. In the second box, request system access according to the employee's duties. and role on CCUBS: ❑ CCUBS (according to the employees roles) ❑ TEAMS TAFS screen ❑ CAPS 5. Justification: e.g. New CCR&R Eligibility Specialist 6. E-mail address: Include e-mail address from CCR&R Internet service provider or request a State Outlook e-mail box. 7. Employee signs under the confidentiality statement. 8. CCR&R supervisor signs on "Signature of Supervisor" line. **Fax system access request form to ECSB CCUBS Program Specialist.** NOTE: CDS access is managed through local HRDCs. Submit a separate access form to the HRDC system administrator for CDS access. System access requests require approval from each program system.
Computer Help: NACCRRAware	The Montana Child Care Resource and Referral Network manages the NACCRRAware referral system. All NACCRRAware questions are directed to the MCCR&R Network office. **Contact MT CCR&R Network NACCRAware Specialist.**
Computer Help:	The DPHHS Technology Services Center (TSC) is open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday (excluding holidays). We provide quality

Passwords, Connecting to State Systems, Hardware, & Software	computer support to the Department by serving of employees, other state agencies, contractors, vendors and internet users in a timely manner. Contact the DPHHS TSC with questions about installing or connecting to State systems: ❑ Passwords ❑ Logon issues ❑ CCUBS installation and connectivity issues ❑ CCUBS Provider Payment Interface (CPPI) connectivity issues ❑ CAPS & TEAMS Mainframe/Extra installation and connectivity issues ❑ NACCRRAware connectivity issues ❑ Virtual Human Services Pavilion connectivity issues ❑ State network connectivity issues (SummitNet & Citrix Metaframe) ❑ State hardware and software applications (Word, Excel, Outlook, etc.) The Call Process When you call the Technology Services Center (TSC), the first available technician will take your call and ask for your login id. If this is the first time you have contacted TSC, we will ask for additional information in order to create your user profile in our tracking software. If you are calling on a previous problem, please have your ticket number available when you contact us. The type of questions we ask are listed below: 1) Your Login ID 2) Your Name 3) Your Phone # 4) Your CCR&R Name and Location 5) Your Pams # and Serial # (State hardware problems) 7) Version of Windows (98, XT, . . .) 8) Name of State server attached to (HHS_XXX_XXX) **Contact the DPHHS Technology Services Center.**
Computer Help: Within CCUBS,	The Northrop Grumman Help Desk is available from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. The Northrop Grumman Help Desk will assist users and troubleshoot problems. Please have your c# available when

CAPS & TEAMS	you call. **Contact the Northrop Grumman Help Desk.**
Computer: Security	*By Lynne Pizzini, Information Security Manager* *Information Services Division, Department of Administration* The following are some do's and mostly don'ts in relation to using electronic mail. These tips may help in alleviating unwanted email and computer viruses. ❑ Do not open email messages or attachments from unknown sources. ❑ Do not open email with a subject that looks suspicious such as "Joke" or "ILOVEYOU". ❑ Turn the preview pane off in the inbox for Outlook. This can alleviate some viruses from spreading via Outlook. ❑ Do not pass along chain letters, virus hoax messages, or other virus reports. Messages such as this on State e-mail should be forwarded to the "Virus Reports" [Outlook] or VirusReports@mt.gov in email. They will then be determined whether they are legitimate and whether a full-scale warning should be distributed. ❑ Do not send a message to everyone in the address list. This can create too much data network traffic on the computer system and cause it to slow down, or fail. ❑ Do not respond or reply to any spam (unsolicited commercial email). Please forward any messages on State e-mail such as this to the "Virus Reports" [Outlook] or VirusReports@mt.gov recipient and an attempt will be made to remove you from any mailing lists. You can also filter out messages such as this using Outlook's junk mail feature. ❑ Do not access personal email accounts from the State's computer network. The messages contained in these accounts are generally not scanned for viruses and could cause a virus to come into the State's computer system. ❑ Do report any suspicious e-mail on the State system to DPHHS Technology Services Center [Outlook] or dphhstech@mt.gov or call

	444-9500. **Policies for use of State and DPHHS computer systems are available at the following web site:** http://www.mt.gov.com/itsd/policy/enterprise.asp
Conference Calls	The Early Childhood Services Bureau hosts a monthly conference call for CCR&R management and staff. Generally, conference calls are scheduled on the second Wednesday of each month. Before the call, participants will receive a telephone number to call, a password, and an agenda via e-mail. Callers may dial in no sooner than 9:28 a.m. Participants are invited to e-mail suggested agenda items the week prior to the conference call. Conference calls begin at 9:28 a.m., and may last up to two hours. **E-mail ECSB CCR&R & Policy Program Specialist.**
Eligibility Policy	CCR&R Eligibility Specialists consult their child care manual and work with their supervisor and director. Policy questions Eligibility policy questions and suggestions for the child care manual. **E-mail ECSB CCR&R & Policy Program Specialist.**
E-mail List: HHS CCR&R Workers	CCR&R eligibility staff members are added to the "HHS CCR&R Workers" e-mail distribution list. If you find an eligibility related coworker is not on the list, please report it. **E-mail ECSB Contract Specialist.**
Employee Name Change	CCR&R employee records will be updated: ❑ CCUBS ❑ ECSB records

	❑ Outlook address book ❑ System access records **E-mail the employee's new name to ECSB CCUBS Program Specialist.**
Equipment: Disposal of Equipment Purchased under ECSB Contract	Code of Federal Regulations - Part 3015 Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations Subpart R -- Property 3015.168 Disposal of Equipment. When original or replacement equipment is no longer to be used in projects or programs currently or previously sponsored by the Federal government, disposal of the equipment shall be made as follows: (a) Equipment with a unit acquisition cost of less than **$5,000** may be sold, retained or otherwise disposed of with no further obligation to the Federal Government. (b) All other equipment may be retained or sold. The Federal Government shall have a right to an amount calculated by multiplying the current market value or proceeds from sale by the Federal share of the equipment (see 3015.172). If part of the federal share of the equipment came from an award under which the exemptions in 3015.164) were applicable, the amount due shall be reduced pro rata. In any case, if the equipment is sold, $100 or 10 percent of the total sales proceeds, whichever is greater, may be deducted and retained from the amount otherwise due for selling and handling expenses. If the recipient's project or program for which or under which the equipment was acquired is still receiving grant support from the same Federal Program and if the awarding agency approves, the net amount due may be used for allowable costs of that project or program. Otherwise, the net amount must be returned to the awarding agency by check or money order. Note: Data must be cleaned from computer equipment used for State or CCR&R purposes before disposal. DPHHS policy suggests that formatting the hard disk(s) is an effective method to ensure information is removed from the system. **Contact** HHSCCUBSPayments@mt.gov
Equipment: State	State surplus property, which is identified by a metallic inventory tag, must be returned to Helena, Cogswell A-112, next to the ECSB: Note: Data must be cleaned from computer equipment used for State or

Surplus Property	CCR&R purposes. DPHHS surplus property procedures include formatting the hard disk(s) as an effective method to ensure information is removed from the system. **Contact DPHHS Equipment Surplus Manager.**
Forms	Please refer to section 6-10 for a list of eligibility related forms and ordering information. If ECSB forms are out-of-stock **Contact DPHHS Internal Support to order DPHHS forms.** **Contact ECSB Program Coordinator for ECSB forms.** **Contact Child Care Licensing Program Assistant when ordering QAD Licensing forms.** **The IRS web site has an electronic version of the W-9 form.**
IRS W-9 Updates & IRS 1099 Reports	Individuals and businesses receiving child care payments must submit an IRS W-9 form to the DPHHS Fiscal Bureau for Agency Wide Accounting Client System (AWACS) payment processing. Generally, IRS W-9 forms are forwarded to DPHHS Fiscal through the Child Care Licensor or the CCR&R. Put the CCUBS Provider 'Person' or 'Organization' number on the IRS W-9 form. The IRS W-9 address information must be kept up-to-date in AWACS to avoid payment delays. NOTE: The tax ID number and the name indicated on the W-9 must match IRS records. If an individual, Jane Doe, is doing business under her personal social security number, she must list her personal name, not a pseudo business name, such as "Jumpin' Jane's Day Care," on the W-9 form. Payments are issued in the name listed. If there is no business account or business tax ID number, a bank may not cash the payment. Providers, who receive $600.00 or more in child care subsidies and other payments during the calendar year, should receive a 1099 tax statement from the State of Montana. The deadline for mailing 1099s is January 31st. The State reports 1099 information to the United States Internal Revenue Service. Legally Unregistered In-home (LUI) payments should not generate a 1099. LUI payments are issued directly to the parent who employs the LUI. CCR&Rs

	should mark the W-9 "Head of Household". If a provider's IRS 1099 does not arrive in the mail, or the 1099 appears to report the wrong amount, the child care provider may contact the DPHHS Fiscal Bureau with the following information: ❑ Name ❑ Telephone number ❑ Tax Identification Number (SSN or EIN) ❑ Current address ❑ A new IRS W-9 is required, if updating payment records ❑ Provider's Organization number (OG#) or Person number (PS#) **Contact DPHHS Fiscal Tech.**

Legally Unregistered Providers	LUP background check and LUP approval status. **Contact LUP Program Coordinator.**
Payment: Amounts Withheld from Warrants	If there is a delay in returning a warrant number back to CCUBS, the tax offset system may be withholding part of the payment. Providers and parents may contact the Department of Revenue Bad Debt tax offset system. Call with the following information: ❑ Name ❑ Tax Identification Number (SSN or EIN) ❑ Warrant number& amount ❑ Any relevant details **Contact Tax Offset office at 444-2527.**
Payment: Direct Deposit	Direct Deposit service for payments to providers from the CCUBS system is available. Here's how to arrange Direct Deposit: *1.* At the bank, complete a 'Direct Deposit Sign-Up Form.' Include the CCUBS Provider 'Organization' (OG*12345*) number or Provider 'Person' (PS*123456*) number near the top of the Direct Deposit form. *The Provider (PV12345) number will suffice, if the Organization or Person number is not available.* 2. Complete the 'Payee' (1) and 'Government Agency' (2) portions of the form using the DPHHS Fiscal Bureau address listed below. 3. The bank provides the 'Financial Institution' (3) information. Providers may want to have a deposit ticket available for this purpose. 4. Mail the completed Direct Deposit form to: DPHHS Fiscal – AWACS 111 North Sanders PO Box 4210 Helena, MT 59604-4210 ❑ After direct deposit arrangements are made, the first payment will still

	come in the mail. This allows DPHHS and the bank to test the direct deposit arrangement without jeopardizing delivery of the payment. ❑ Each Direct Deposit requires 2 business days from the date the invoice is processed for electronic fund transfer (EFT) processing. Direct Deposit is expected to be nearly as timely as payment by mail. ❑ The Department will mail a confirmation of each Direct Deposit transaction. This will have a "settlement date." This is the date the EFT should be at your bank. ❑ If, after trying Direct Deposit, a provider wants to return to receiving payments by mail, contact the CCR&R to change the payment method and send a written request to DPHHS Fiscal - AWACS.

Payment: Invoice Over 60 Days (Expired)	Should an invoice become expired, please contact HHSCCUBSPayments@mt.gov.
Payment: Stale Dated Warrants	Should an old, un-cashed warrant be found, please submit the following information. The Department of Administration will send an affidavit to the individual, so a replacement can be requested: ❑ Warrant Number ❑ Warrant Amount ❑ Tax Identification Number (SSN or EIN) ❑ Case Number ❑ Provider Number ❑ Recipient's current address ❑ Recipient's telephone **Contact** HHSCCUBSPayments@mt.gov
Payment: Where is the Payment?	If CCUBS does not display a warrant number within two business days, the invoice may not be released from the invoice screen -or- the recipient's AWACS record may not be correctly attached to CCUBS: ⇒ Verify that the invoice screen has been released. ⇒ Verify AWACS attachment, noting the 'AWACS ID', 'AWACS Address Code', and the optional 'EFT ID.' ❑ Registered & Licensed providers are attached on the 'Organization Montana' screen. The AWACS attachment date is also indicated on the 'Organization' screen. ❑ LUPs are attached on the 'Person Montana' screen. The AWACS attachment date is also indicated on the 'Person' screen. ❑ If the invoice has been released, and processed, yet there is no warrant number, contact the CCUBS Help Desk. If CCUBS shows a warrant number and the payment is not delivered in a reasonable time, the payment may be delayed in the mail:

	⇒ Check the invoice to determine if the payment was directed to the parent or to the provider. ⇒ Verify AWACS attachment, noting the 'AWACS ID', 'AWACS Address Code', and the optional 'EFT ID.' ⇒ Verify the warrant address in AWACS – the address associated with the 'AWACS Address Code' in CCUBS. ⇒ Also, verify addresses in CCUBS, however, the CCUBS address does not affect the payment address. **All address changes must be confirmed by submitting a new IRS W-9:** ❑ **Registered/Licensed providers send their W-9 to the DPHHS Fiscal Office.** ❑ **LUPs send their W-9 to the DPHHS Fiscal Office.** If a payment is lost and a provider requests a replacement warrant, the provider must agree in writing to return any duplicate payment to DPHHS Fiscal. DPHHS will verify the status of the missing warrant and send an agreement for the provider to sign, before issuing a replacement payment. If you are not able to resolve the payment issues noted above, include the following information: ❑ Name ❑ Tax Identification Number (SSN or EIN) ❑ AWACS ID Number ❑ CCUBS Case Number ❑ CCUBS Provider Number ❑ CCUBS Provider 'Organization' or Provider 'Person' Number ❑ Warrant Number and Amount ❑ Current mailing address **Contact** HHSCCUBSPayments@mt.gov
Provider Lists	Requests for lists of child care providers are referred to the DPHHS Quality Assurance Division Child Care Licensing Program. Solicitation from this list is prohibited, so QAD attaches a disclaimer regarding solicitation.

	Contact Child Care Licensing Program Assistant.
Provider Star Rating	ECSB Best Beginnings Program Officer approves tiered reimbursement star ratings for providers on CCUBS. The provider's CCR&R is notified by e-mail. **Contact ECSB Best Beginnings Program Officer.**
Question & Answer Procedure	Question and Answer Procedure: 1. If the eligibility worker has a question, first attempt to look the information up in the manual. 2. If the information cannot be determined by looking in the manual, then the worker should go to their supervisor for information. 3. If the supervisor does not know the answer then a question should be submitted in writing (e-mail is fine) to the ECSB Policy Specialist. If the question in regard to a quality program, the question should be submitted to the ECSB Best Beginnings Program Officer. ➢ ECSB requests that each CCR&R agency designate one person to be responsible for submitting policy questions to central office. 4. The ECSB will attempt to answer questions submitted in this manner immediately but CCR&R agencies can expect to receive a response within two days unless the question requires "staffing the question by ECSB". CCR&Rs should include the Child Care Unit Supervisor as a CC on your e-mail question. This will insure that there is another person to respond if the Policy Specialist is unavailable. **E-mail CCR&R & Policy Program Specialist.**
Special Needs Subsidy Rate	The Early Childhood Project contracts with Child Care plus+ The Center on Inclusion in Early Childhood to coordinate inclusion services. Families, providers, & CCR&R staff may contact the Statewide Inclusion Coordinator for guidance in serving children with special needs and evaluating the need for a

	special needs subsidy rate. **Contact Statewide Inclusion Coordinator.**
Travel ID Card	DPHHS Human and Community services contractors may request 'non-employee' State business travel ID cards to assist in obtaining State rates for lodging when traveling on business. ECSB generally issues cards to CCR&R staff in June, for the following SFY. **E-mail** HHSCCUBSPayments@mt.gov
Travel Policies & Lodging Rates	When making room reservations, CCR&R staff should confirm the business's willingness to offer the State rate to 'non-employee' travel ID holders. (Recently, one facility insisted on seeing a regular State employee ID card, complete with photo, before they would offer State rates.) **The Department of Administration hosts a State employee travel policy web page, which lists lodging facilities offering state rates:** **http://www.mt.gov.com/doa/travel/index.htm**
Waiting List Policy Exceptions	After case notes are complete, e-mail ECSB with the following information: ❑ Child's name ❑ County, where family lives ❑ Case & case-event number (CS*12345* CE*99*) ❑ Relevant Documentation (provider grant assessment, etc.) **Child with Special Needs: E-mail request to ECSB Program Coordinator.** **Request for Policy Exception: E-mail request to ECSB CCR&R & Policy Program Specialist.**

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Star Quality Program**

Supersedes: **Section 7.1 (05/01/05)**

References: **52-2-701 - 704 & 52-2-711 - 713 MCA Sections 37.80.101-103, 37.80.201-202, 37.80.205-206, 37.80.301-302, 37.80.305 -306, 37.80.315-316, 37.80.501 37.95.620 ARM 45 CFR Part 98.20 – 47**

Background Information

In November of 1999, the Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council requested that the State of Montana investigate the feasibility of creating and implementing a tiered system of reimbursement in order to pay a higher rate for child care providers who offer higher quality care. Four primary goals for the tiered reimbursement program were identified:

1. To improve the quality of care available to all Montana children.
2. To reward high quality care with higher compensation.
3. To provide information to parents about the basic level of quality they can expect.
4. To increase the supply of high quality providers willing to serve children receiving "Best Beginnings" scholarship assistance.

This program is intended to provide fair and equitable reimbursement rates to child care providers participating in the state's Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program, while ensuring higher quality child care services for all children and families in Montana.

Montana's design has evolved through studying nationally recognized best practices and by incorporating input from local child care specialists and other interested individuals. Montana has chosen a three-level program that accommodates an intermediate step in quality improvement. Level one consists of facilities that are in compliance with state of Montana Licensing Regulations, level two (one-star) consists of facilities that meet the requirements for a two or three year extended license, that comply with quality indicators in the area of staff training, staff turnover, parent involvement, and child development and level three (two-star) consists of facilities that meet the requirements for a two or three year extended license and are accredited by

NAEYC, NAFCC or NAA.

After implementing a tiered system of reimbursement for three years Montana has realized that this system causes inequity between facilities that serve Best Beginnings Scholarship children and facilities that serve fewer children. Using the star rating as a marketing tool parents should view the star as a quality rating versus seeing stars as programs that serve low-income children. After review, the Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council requested the State of Montana refer to this program as the Star Quality Program not as a tiered reimbursement program.

Primary Caregiver Definition

To participate in the Star Quality Program all primary child care providers must comply with licensing and registration requirements. A primary caregiver must be at least 18 years of age and shall meet all of the following qualifications:

(a) verify that they have received a minimum of at least eight hours of continuing education annually provided by the department or other professional child care education and development programs of national, state or local child care organizations, or college course work in early childhood areas, or child development. Continuing education must relate to the Montana early care and education knowledge base;

(b) two years experience as a licensed or registered group or family day care home provider or day care center staff person or hold a bachelor of arts or an associate degree in education or a related field;

(b) hold a current course completion card in infant, child and adult CPR and infant choking response; and

(c) be currently certified in standard first aid.

For Star Quality purposes, a primary child care provider must in addition do the following in order to ensure quality:

- ☐ Every individual child has a primary caregiver assigned to them for a significant portion of the time the child is in attendance;
- ☐ Assess and provide care and education services for each child based on the child's strengths, interests and needs;
- ☐ Assess and incorporate elements of each family's culture, goals and

aspirations for the child into each child's individual care and education program; and

- ☐ Work, on a regular basis, with the families and other child care program staff in planning for the child.

NAEYC Accreditation

NAEYC / Accreditation by the National Association of Early Childhood Programs:

The accreditation process involves three steps:

1. **Self-Study** – program personnel and parents conduct a self-study to determine how well the program meets the Academy's criteria, make needed improvements, and report to compliance with the criteria on the Program Description form provided by the Academy.
2. **Validation** – trained validators make an on-site visit to verify the accuracy of the Program Description.
3. **Accreditation Decision** – A three-person Commission considers the validated Program Description and makes the accreditation decision based on professional judgment. Programs are not required to demonstrate 100% compliance.

NAEYC Accreditation fees are paid at two points in the process:

1. The **application fee** is paid to initiate the process and to receive the self-study materials. This fee is determined by the total number of children enrolled regardless of whether they attend on a half-day or full-day basis. For this fee, the program receives the self-study materials including multiple copies of the Observation form and staff and Parent Questionnaires.
2. The **validation fee** is paid if based on the results of the self-study and the program decides to pursue accreditation. The largest number of children attending on a given day determines this fee. For this fee, the program receives an on-site visit and the accreditation decision.

For more information on NAEYC Accreditation contact:

National Academy of Early Childhood Programs
NAEYC
1509 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036-1426
(202) 232-8777 ext. 360 or 1-800-424-2460
FAX 202-328-1846
Web page: http://www.naeyc.org/

NAFCC Accreditation

NAFCC -National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation:

The National Association for Family Child Care is the national professional membership organization for child care providers who work in their own homes. NAFCC, chartered in 1982, established the first national family child care accreditation in 1988. Accreditation is intended for those providers who meet the child care standards defined by state licensing and registration agencies and who have demonstrated a commitment to reach beyond these minimum requirements to achieve professional standards of excellence. The accreditation process involves the provider, parents, and a NAFCC representative in a comprehensive study of the child care home.

For more information on NAFCC Accreditation contact:
NAFCC
1-800-359-4381
Web page: www.nafcc.org

NAA Accreditation

The National After School Association (NAA) program Improvement and Accreditation System consists of the following 3 steps:

1. Purchase the NAA Standards for Quality School-Age Care – this is the

process of reviewing the standards and discussing how your program is doing and focusing on targeted improvements.

2. Purchase the self-study and accreditation kit- this self-study you do cooperatively with your families, children and staff. Summarize the information, set goals for improvement, and take action on these goals.
3. Apply for NAA accreditation and pay an endorsement visit fee – submit your self-study summary and program description, two NAA endorsers visit your program, and your program is accredited if the ratings meet the criteria for accreditation. The report that you receive identifies your program strengths and areas for continued improvement.

For more information on NAA Accreditation contact:

The National After School-Association
529 Main Street Suite 214
Charlston, MA 02129
800.617.8242 or 617.778.6020
FAX 617.778.6025

Web: www.naaweb.org

Rate Structure

In setting these rates, the Department looked at anticipated service levels by CCR&R district and by state paid provider rates. The recommended funding mechanism was to utilize a percentage rate above the provider rates, in both the hourly and daily rate categories. See "Provider Rates," section 1-4 of this manual.

One-Star provider rates are increased 10% above the base rate.
Two-Star provider rates are increased 15% above the base rate.

One-Star Facility

Facilities eligible for a one-star rated registration/license are those that have been granted a two or three year extended license by their QAD Child Care

licensor. These providers apply for a one-star rating by completing an application that provides the Department with information about five quality indicators.

1. Staff training – facilities need to document on an annual basis (copies of Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry certificates submitted with application) that at least 75% (for centers) 50% (for family and group homes) of the staff (primary caregivers), is at or above Level 2 on the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry.
   - Family home providers would have to be on the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry at Level 2 or higher.
2. Primary caregivers – The application will require facilities to document how each primary caregiver meets the quality definition of a primary caregiver as stated above.
3. Facility's Developmental Plan –The application will include a check off process to show whether the provider is working towards quality indicators for accreditation in meeting the developmental needs of the children in care. The check off list will address the physical, social-emotional, cognitive and creative domains.
4. Parental Involvement Plan –The application will include a check off process that will determine whether the facility is working towards meeting parental involvement quality indicators for accreditation. These quality indicators include:
   - Facility's pre-enrollment policy
   - Parent-teacher conferences
   - Parent involvement/communication techniques
5. Personnel Policies - The application will include a check off process that will determine whether the facility is working towards meeting personnel policy quality indicators for accreditation. These quality indicators include:
   - Written job descriptions that assign responsibilities
   - Staff understanding of program requirements
   - Professional development for staff and how it is tied to compensation; a salary schedule is submitted.

QAD extended licensing visits must be unannounced, as required by law and good licensing practice. A provider may call a child care licensor and request an extended license/registration visit. The QAD licensor will log the request and schedule a visit on their calendar. This will occur 1-2 months before renewal. However, the licensor will not tell the provider when the visit is scheduled.

Applications and renewals for one-star facilities will be handled through the Early Childhood Services Bureau.. Although these facilities have two or three year licenses, there are annual requirements that must be met both for licensing and reimbursement reasons. Annual turnover rates and primary caregiver (as defined for the Star Quality Program) data will be monitored through the CCUBS (Child Care under the Big Sky) computer system. If turnover rate of primary caregiving staff is above 50% for a one-star, providers may be asked for justification of turnover. Lower turnover of primary caregiving staff should be an outcome of the Star Quality Program.

Facilities would be asked to submit information needed for their star level prior to the expiration of their star rating (facilities will be notified with a written notice six weeks prior to their expiration date) to the Early Childhood Services Bureau:

Linda Kjorstad
DPHHS Early Childhood Services Bureau
PO Box 202925
Helena, MT 59620-2925
(406) 657-2067
FAX: (406) 657-2055

Two-Star Facility

Facilities eligible for a two-star rated registration/license are those that have been granted a two or three year extended license by their QAD Child Care licensor and are accredited. Montana will recognize the following

accreditations:

1. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
2. National Afterschool Association (NAA)
3. National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC)

Centers and school age care facilities that have achieved accreditation by either NAEYC or NAA and meet the quality definition for primary caregivers (as stated above) would be assigned a two-star license.

Group and family homes would have to have one full-time primary caregiver (as defined for the Star Quality Program) on the Montana Early Care and Education Career Development Practitioner Registry at a Level 3 or higher in addition to their NAFCC accreditation, in order to receive a two-star rating on their registration.

In order for a facility to apply for a two-star status they must possess a two or three year extended registration/license and submit a short application form with proof of accreditation and copies of Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry at a Level 3 or higher to the Early Childhood Services Bureau. The application will require facilities to document how each primary caregiver meets the quality definition of a primary caregiver as stated above. Facilities annual turnover rate data will be monitored through the CCUBS (Child Care under the Big Sky) computer system. If turnover rate of primary caregiving staff is above 40% for a two-star, providers may be asked for justification of turnover. Providers will be asked to submit information needed for their star level prior to the expiration of their star rating to the Early Childhood Services Bureau. Facilities will be notified with a written notice six weeks prior to their expiration date.

Termination/ Reduction of a Star Rating

A star rating may be terminated for the following:

1. A QAD Child Care Licensor reduces the facility's two or three year extended registration/license back to a one-year registration/license. CCUBS will issue a notice of change in level status to the facility.

2. The facility's accreditation is not renewed or is revoked. CCUBS will issue a notice of change in level status to the facility.
3. The facility's primary caregiving staff does not meet the Star Quality definition of a primary caregiver as stated above.
4. The facility is not operational.
5. A licensed or registered child care provider will lose eligibility to participate in the Star Quality Program if the provider has been disqualified from participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) for cause.

Changes in a facility's star rating level status decreasing the reimbursement payment will be effective the first day of the month following the change in CCUBS.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Career Development**

Supercedes: **Child Care 7-2 (1/1/02)**

References: **45 CFR Part 98.51 (b) (2) (ii)**

Background Information

Montana has developed a comprehensive coordinated career development system for practitioners working in every type of early childhood setting.

The goals of career development are to:

1. Define what practitioners need to know.
2. Develop a formalized multi-leveled education and training system for early childhood.
3. Ensure that training is high quality and meets the needs of practitioners.
4. Provide equal access to education and training through innovative delivery and a coordinated system of planning, promoting and implementing learning opportunities.
5. Promote recognition and increased compensation by formal documentation of practitioners' professional development.
6. Celebrate cultural and developmental diversity of practitioners' children and families.
7. Help parents make informed choices about early care and education options for their children.

The Montana Early Care and Education Knowledge Base defines what practitioners who work with young children and families need to know, and includes content areas that define the knowledge, skills and attributes desirable for early childhood practitioners. At the core of the Knowledge Base are personal characteristics.

Content Areas

- ❑ cultural and developmental diversity
- ❑ health, safety, and nutrition
- ❑ child growth and development
- ❑ environmental design

- ❑ child guidance
- ❑ family and community partnerships
- ❑ program management
- ❑ curriculum
- ❑ observation and assessment
- ❑ professionalism
- ❑ personal attributes/characteristic

The primary purpose of the Knowledge Base is to provide a basis for self-assessment and reflection and help practitioners determine areas of professional competence and further growth.

These three components of career development are designed to promote quality-training opportunities for early care and education practitioners and establish a pool of trainers statewide:

Trainer Directory

The Trainer Directory identifies individual trainers and instructors who are available to provide workshops, courses and other training for early childhood practitioners in the Knowledge Base content areas. This directory will identify trainers by name, location work and educational background, availability, areas of expertise and professional references.

Training Approval System

The Training Approval System is designed to assure quality by approving non-college credit training available that relates to the Knowledge Base and Career Path. This system will also identify training eligible for continuing education units (CEUs) and Merit Pay. All agencies, organizations, and individuals offering non-credit training for early childhood practitioners must apply for approval to be included on the Training Calendar and for acceptance for Career Path approved training hours.

The Early Childhood Project approves training for early care and education practitioners who are required to complete eight hours of annual training by state child care licensing and additional training hours for the *The Montana Practitioner Registry.* The process is as follows:

- ☐ Training sponsors apply for training approval via the on-line Training Approval Application or through the mail with the paper application. To assure processing prior to the event, applications must be submitted at least 20 working days prior to the event.
- ☐ Upon approval, the ECP will send the official Sign-In Sheet, Certificate, and Evaluation Form that identifies the event by title, date, Knowledge Base content area, hours and code number. These are emailed CCR & R's and mailed to all other sponsors.
- ☐ Participants must sign-in at the training event with their personal state licensing PS# or social security number.
- ☐ A certificate must be given to each participant who completes the training as hard copy documentation of their participation. Certificates should be kept in their personal professional development file.
- ☐ After the training, the sponsor must check the Sign-In Sheet to make sure all participants completed the training and that the names and numbers are legible before sending it to the ECP for data entry. (Only the 12 Child Care Resource and Referral agencies do their own data entry at the secure website designed for them. Each CCR & R agency has a password to access the site.)
- ☐ All training sponsors are expected to send the Sign-In Sheets to the ECP within 5 working days of the event. (CCR & R agencies will submit participant data to the ECP online within 5 working days.)
- ☐ The data from the official Sign-In Sheets will be entered into their individual training record which may be accessed at www.montana.edu/ecp/personnel. If individuals sign-in with a social security number only and are not on The Practitioner Registry or have not come across from state child care licensing to the ECP database, their training records are being stored and will not be visible on-line yet.
- ☐ State licensing, Early Childhood Services Bureau program monitors, Early Childhood Project staff, directors, and practitioners may all access training records at the above site. If on-line records do not reflect enough training hours that people need for licensing or Practitioner Registry annual renewal, they will have to submit hard copy documentation (copies) of certificates, Individual Request for Training Approval Forms or college transcripts.

Questions and concerns about training approval and training records may be addressed to the Early Childhood Project at ecp@montana.edu or by calling 1-800-213-6310 or 406-994-4746.

Training Calendar

The Training Calendar lists approved training opportunities statewide and is updated regularly. The calendar may be accessed at the www.montana.edu/ecp web site for the Early Childhood Project. This will help practitioners locate training in the knowledge Base content areas available to meet their professional development needs. The Training Calendar identifies training taking place in the 12 Child Care Resource and Referral districts across the state. Regional and state conference information will be included on the calendar.

Procedures for Person Number (PS#) Cards

Montana Child Care Licensing assigns Person Numbers (PS#s) to all staff in licensed and registered child care facilities when new staff are reported to them. If a staff person is designated by licensing in a role type (works directly with children more than 160 hours per year) that requires the person to complete eight hours of approved training annually, their name, residential mailing address, social security number, and PS# are electronically added from state child care licensing to the Early Childhood Project (ECP) database on a weekly basis.

- ☐ The ECP mails out PS# cards to new staff who have been added to the ECP database every month.
- ☐ Individuals sign-in at approved training events with their PS#. This information is entered into their training record which may be reviewed online at www.montana.edu/ecp/personnel. Events prior to September 1, 2004 will not show up unless the individual was active on The Practitioner Registry and had at least one Registry renewal before that date.
- ☐ If an individual does not have a PS#, they may sign-in with their social security number. Training hours for which individuals sign-in with a

social security number may not show up in their online training record. These hours are being stored in the ECP database, but may not be visible online yet.

- ☐ State licensors, Early Childhood Services Bureau program managers, ECP staff, directors, and practitioners will use the online site to check training records. If the required hours do not show up, practitioners will need to submit hard copy documentation (certificates, Individual Request for Approval forms, or college transcripts) of the additional hours.

Early Care & Education Career Path

The Early Care and Education Career Path is intended to promote professional development for early care and education practitioners by providing a framework for recording and recognizing experience, training, and educational accomplishments.

It describes nine levels of career development based on training, education, experience in the field and professional involvement. The Career Path charts a course for any individual developing a plan for professional growth in early care and education.

As information becomes more available to parents and communities about the strong links between quality early care and education and practitioner training and education, the demand for well-trained child care providers and program staff will grow.

Practitioner Registry

Early Childhood practitioners are called teachers, caregivers, child care providers, educators, trainers, and advocates. Their diversity and that of the families they serve is recognized and supported by the Montana Career Development Advisory Board. Career development applies to all practitioners -- those in entry-level positions without prior training to those with advanced degrees. Early Childhood practitioners work directly or indirectly with young children ages birth to 8 in a variety of settings:

- ❑ family and group child care homes

- ❑ child care centers
- ❑ Head Start programs
- ❑ preschools
- ❑ public and private schools - pre-kindergarten through 3rd grade
- ❑ higher education - community and tribal colleges and universities
- ❑ community and state agencies serving children and families

The Practitioner Registry is designed to help practitioners accumulate a record of their training, education and work experience and place them on the Career Path. Enrollment on the Practitioner Registry is voluntary and will afford practitioners recognition for their dedication to ongoing professional development. This information may also be helpful to supervisors, employers, and parents. Each practitioner listed on the registry will receive:

- ❑ a certificate that recognizes professional achievements of training, education, experience, and placement on the Career Path.
- ❑ a complete and updated record of early childhood training education, and professional contributions.

Further Information

Further information regarding Career Development may be obtained from:

Montana Early Childhood Project
Montana State University
PO Box 173540
Bozeman, MT 59717-3540

406-994-4746
1-800-213-6310
Fax 406-994-2013

ecp@montana.edu
www.montana.edu/ecp

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Infant Toddler Certification**

Supercedes: **Child Care 7-3 (10/1/99)**

References: **45 CFR Part 98.51 (b) (2) (ii)**

Background Information

The early interactions between an infant and a primary caregiver are instrumental in shaping the child's brain, laying the foundation for future learning and emotional growth. When that relationship changes frequently or is suddenly discontinued, the development of the child's brain is also interrupted. It is vital that infants and toddlers receiving care outside of their homes get high quality care from the same knowledgeable, reliable and nurturing caregiver over an extended period of time.

In 1998 Congress earmarked a portion of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) for infant/toddler care. States were mandated to implement activities that are designed to increase the supply of quality care for infants and toddlers.

In light of the recent research on infant brain development, Montana's Early Childhood Advisory Council recommended that the first phase of the Montana Infant/Toddler program be focused on developing a high quality training system and certification program for infant/toddler caregivers. This curriculum is approved and available statewide for child care providers and other early care and education practitioners, who wish to become certified infant toddler caregivers.

Infant/toddler care is in high demand across the state. Parents are faced with the difficult task of finding high quality and affordable care for their infants and toddlers in a market where the demand exceeds the supply. Child care providers report that they have a difficult time opening more slots for infants and toddlers because the staff to child ratio is low and the cost to provide care to an infant is high It is fiscally difficult at best to operate this type of facility.

We have learned through data collected from Montana's I/T Demonstration Project there is a direct correlation between the compensation level for staff and turnover rate and additional funding to programs does make a difference

in meeting quality indicators for infants and toddlers.

Montana's Early Childhood Advisory Council recommends that the second phase of the Montana Infant/Toddler program be focused on higher quality of care for as many infants and toddlers as possible in-group settings. With this recommendation the Infant/Toddler Mini Grant Program and the Infant/Toddler stipend program have been developed to allow providers who care or are planning to care for infants and/or toddlers access monies to achieve a higher quality of care and to allow Infant/Toddler certified caregivers to receive higher compensation for caring for infants and/or toddlers.

Infant/Toddler Caregiver Certification

The state has established an Infant/Toddler Caregiver Certification. In order to be certified as an infant/toddler caregiver, a child care provider must complete at least one of the following training requirements:

- ☐ A current Infant/Toddler CDA
- ☐ A current Family Child Care CDA that includes 30 hours of documented infant/toddler course work
- ☐ The complete, four-module, Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers (minimum of 60 hours of instruction).
- ☐ Completion of a Child Care Development Specialist Apprenticeship, that includes 30 hours of documented infant/toddler course work.
- ☐ An Associate Degree in Early Childhood/Child Development that includes 30 hours of documented infant/toddler course work.
- ☐ A Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood/Child Development that includes 30 hours of documented infant/toddler instruction.

Process for Becoming I/T certified

For a provider who becomes a certified infant/toddler caregiver by completing:

- ☐ A current Infant/Toddler CDA
- ☐ A current Family Child Care CDA that includes 30 hours of documented infant/toddler course work
- ☐ An Associate Degree in Early Childhood/Child Development that includes 30 hours of documented infant/toddler course work.

☐ A Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood/Child Development that includes 30 hours of documented infant/toddler instruction.

The provider must notify the Quality Specialist and provide documentation of one of the above. Once this is done the Quality Specialist will check the Infant Toddler certified box on the Montana Person screen in CCUBS. The Quality Specialist will then notify the Contract monitor to send a Montana Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Certificate and an application for the Infant Toddler Stipend Program to the caregiver.

For a provider who becomes a certified infant/toddler caregiver by completing:

☐ The complete, four-module, Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers (minimum of 60 hours of instruction).

The Infant Toddler instructor will send a class list of participants who successfully complete the above coursework to the Quality Specialist. The Quality Specialist will check the Infant Toddler certified box for each caregiver on the Montana Person screen in CCUBS. The Quality Specialist will then notify the Contract monitor to send a Montana Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Certificate and an application for the Infant Toddler Stipend Program to each caregiver.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Infant Toddler Mini-Grants**

Supercedes: **Child Care 7-3 (10/1/99)**

References: **45 CFR Part 98.51 (b) (2) (ii)**

General Information

The Best Beginnings Infant and Toddler Mini Grants will be awarded from the Infant Toddler Earmark Quality monies. These mini grants are designed to cover cost of Infant Toddler Training, Infant Toddler developmentally appropriate equipment, supplies, and/or meeting Infant Toddler regulatory requirements.

The goal of the Infant/Toddler Mini Grant is to improve the quality of care available for infants and toddlers.

Infant and Toddler Mini Grants are for providers who need funds to:

- Replace or acquire infant toddler equipment;
- Purchase developmentally appropriate infant toddler toys and/or supplies;
- Meet regulatory requirements for caring of infants and toddlers, e.g. install sink next to diaper changing area; or
- Hire substitute care, to enable the provider/or staff to attend infant toddler training, conferences, etc.

Infant/Toddler Mini-Grant Program Description & Expectations

Applications must be complete.

- The narrative must include an overview and explanation of any enhancements in providing care for infants and toddlers.
- Funds received under this grant must not be used to pay personnel expenses other than substitute care to enable the provider and/or staff to attend infant/toddler trainings, conferences.
- Funds may not be used for televisions.
- In selecting providers to receive awards, a higher priority will be given to providers who are serving infants and toddlers under the State's Best Beginnings Scholarship Program and to providers who have not previously been funded under the DPHHS Provider Grants Program and/or the Infant Toddler Demonstration Project.
- Providers who are awarded a Best Beginnings Infant Toddler Mini Grant must agree to remain in business as a current licensed or registered provider for 12 months from date of award or return all grant funds.

- Providers must not discriminate against children based on race, national origin, ethnic background, handicap, sex or religion.
- Providers who do not receive a grant may reapply the next quarter. The second page of the application may be used as a communication tool for asking questions and receiving feedback on a proposal. The ECSB will respond to in writing to inquiries received in writing.

NOTE: Possible denial reasons: currently participating in the Best Beginnings Provider Grant program; low narrative score; not an active member of the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry; and/or incomplete application.

Who May Apply

- Established licensed or registered child care providers who are caring for or planning to care for infants and toddlers, or
- Groups or individuals interested in establishing a new licensed/registered child care facility caring for infants and toddlers. Child Care providers must be licensed or registered before grant funds are released.

Additionally,

- Providers need to be active participants on the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry at any level on the Career Path. A copy of the registry certificate must be included with the Infant and Toddler Mini Grant application.
- Providers who have been disqualified with cause from the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) are not eligible to apply for a Best Beginnings Infant Toddler Mini Grant.

Deadlines:

1st quarter – October 1 through December 31of each year. All I/T mini grant applications for 1st quarter consideration must be postmarked no later than September 1.

2nd quarter – January 1 through March 31 of each year. All I/T mini grant applications for 2nd quarter consideration must be postmarked no later than December 1.

3rd quarter – April 1 through June 30 of each year. All I/T mini grant applications for 3rd quarter consideration must be postmarked no later than March 1.

4th quarter – July 1 through September 30 of each year. All I/T mini grant applications for 4th quarter consideration must be postmarked no later than June 1.

Maximum Grant Awards

The maximum amount awarded for any Infant Toddler Mini Grants will be:

- ❑ $1,500 for a Licensed Child Care Center;
- ❑ $1,000 for a Group Child Care Home; or
- ❑ $1,000 for a Family Child Care Home.

Invoicing for Payment

The award payment will be made on a one-time reimbursement basis only. Expenditures prior to the time the grant was awarded are not allowed.

A summary form will be sent with the provider's award notice. This summary form is to be completed and returned with receipts to the Early Childhood Services Bureau for reimbursement.

Best Beginnings Infant/Toddler Mini Grants will be payable up to one year from the date of the award.

CCUBS Process

1. Upon receipt of an application, ECSB Contract Specialist will check to verify the applicant is entered as a Person and as a Provider in the CCUBS system. Review the 'Provider' screen to ensure the address matches the W-9 that was submitted with the Infant Toddler Mini Grant application. If the applicant is not entered as a Person in CCUBS, the ECSB will enter this information based on the Infant Toddler Mini Grant application and W-9.

   NOTE: When navigating in CCUBS on the Contract Application screen, use the TAB key on the computer keyboard to move from box to box.

2. Applications are logged in on the CCUBS system when they are received in the ECSB office. This is done by entering information on the 'Contract Application' screen.

Applicant ID: The applicant's PV #;
Fed Fiscal Year: The appropriate federal fiscal year;
Application Date: The date that information is being entered into CCUBS;
Application Received: The date the application was date stamped;
Contract Type: Infant Toddler Mini Grant;
Application Status: Use the drop-down menu and select *Received*;
Effective Date: The start of the 12-month time period;
Denial Reason: Not used to enter in application requests;
End Date: The end of the 12-month time period;
Proposal Score: Not used to enter in application requests; and
Application Checklist:
Mark the Training/Project Plan.

3. Applications are prioritized and evaluated for participation in the program. Applications with the highest scores are awarded the mini grant. Approximately 25 mini grants are awarded each quarter. The score is then entered on the Contract Application screen in the CCUBS system and the status is changed to either approved or denied.

4. After the applications have been evaluated, the ECSB Program Specialist will update the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS. The 'Application Status' will be changed to either *Approved* or *Denied* and saved. If the status is *Denied*, the Program Specialist will also be required to enter a Denial Reason on the screen.

5. CCUBS will generate and automatically send a denial letter to the applicant.

6. Upon approval of the application, the ECSB Contract Specialist will set up the contract for all approved applicants following the steps below:
    a. On the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS, double click the box in the upper right hand corner labeled *Contract No.* This action will take the worker to the 'Contract screen'.
    b. On the Contractor tab, enter the PS# of the applicant in the white box under Person ID* and hit the TAB key.
    c. On to the Budget tab, put the cursor in the 'Budget Section' box. Select the Infant Toddler Mini Grant from Budget Section drop down menu. **Using the mouse** move the cursor into the 'Budget Item' box and enter the budget items (Budget Items

may be typed in word-specifically or may be selected from a list using the F9 key):

- *Ex: Training,* hit the TAB key and type amount.
- *Complete for each budget item.*
- *Advances*, hit the TAB key and type in 0.
- Click on the SAVE icon.

At this point, CCUBS will SAVE the screen with a Contract Number.

d. On the 'Contract Details' tab select the Contract Status drop down menu: highlight *2. Negotiation Complete*, and SAVE; highlight *3. Final In-Route Signatures*, and SAVE; highlight *4. Mailed*, and SAVE; lastly highlight *5. Executed*, and SAVE.

7. CCUBS will generate an award letter that must be printed in the ECSB contract office. In CCUBS, Select *Navigate To*, *Notifications*, Enter the Contract Number and hit *Execute [F8]*. To view the notice, click on *View Notice*. Award letters are sent to the successful applicant along with a Best Beginnings Infant Toddler Mini-Grant Award Summary.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend**

References: **37.95.102, 37.95.1001-1021 ARM, 45 CFR Part 98.51 (b) (2) (ii)**

General Information

The Best Beginnings Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend Program is offered to help reduce the turnover of infant toddler certified caregivers in early childhood programs. The goal of this stipend is to maximize the continuity of care for as many infants and toddlers as possible in child care settings. Research shows that a child's ability to develop a healthy attachment to parents and other caregivers is critical for overall development. The early interactions between an infant and a primary caregiver are instrumental in shaping the child's brain, laying the foundation for future learning and emotional growth. When that relationship changes frequently or is suddenly discontinued, the development of the child's brain is also interrupted. It is vital that infants and toddlers receive responsive and nurturing care from a knowledgeable caregiver over an extended period. This is also important for parents and caregivers because building trusting relationships takes time and is the key to high quality infant toddler care.

Who May Apply

Any Montana certified infant toddler caregiver (as defined in Section 7-3a Infant/Toddler Certification) who is working a minimum of 5 hours per day (M-F) providing direct care to infants and/or toddlers in a licensed/registered facility. Additionally, the certified infant toddler caregiver must be an active participant of the Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry at any level on the Career Path.

A family home provider or group home owner who has been disqualified for cause from the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) may not apply for the Best Beginnings Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend Program.

> **NOTE:** Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipends are awarded to individuals, not facilities. Employment at a facility that has been disqualified for cause from the CACFP does not preclude participation in this program.

Application Process

Once an individual has successfully completed the appropriate training required to become a certified infant toddler caregiver (see section 7-3a for more information) they will be awarded a certificate. The Early Childhood Services Bureau mails the individual a *Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver*

Certificate and at the same time, an application for the Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend Program (DPHHS-HCS/CC-129a) and form W-9.

Applications for the Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend Program will **only be accepted during the months of *January* and *July*.** Completed applications and W-9s must be received in the Early Childhood Services Bureau's office by 5 PM of the last working day of January and July, respectively. Submit Best Beginnings Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend applications to:

Early Childhood Services Bureau
PO Box 202952
Helena, MT 59620-2952

Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipends are awarded twice per year. Applicants will be notified within 30-days of the application due date if their application has been accepted or denied.

Application Evaluation and Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Applications and W-9s must be complete and signed.
- Applicants must be active participants on the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry. A copy of their registry certificate must be attached to the application form.
- Priority for acceptance into the infant toddler caregiver stipend program will be given in the following order:
    1. Highest priority will be given to applicants who are employed in licensed or registered child care facilities who have earned either a One-Star or Two-Star quality rating.
    2. Second highest priority will be given to applicants who are employed in licensed or registered child care facilities that serve children receiving Best Beginnings child care scholarship assistance at a rate of fifty percent or more of their license capacity.
    3. The third highest priority will be given to applicants who have earned an Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Certificate and are employed in a facility that does not meet the criteria outlined in priorities one and two above.
    4. The fourth highest priority will be given to applicants who have previously completed the Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver

Stipend Program.

5. The Department reserves the right to deny any or all applications based on availability of funding.

Program Description & Expectations

The begin date for participants accepted into the Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend program will be either January first or July first.

> **NOTE:** Program participants must maintain continuous employment with the same licensed or registered child care facility for the 18-month period beginning either January 1 or July 1 to receive the total stipend of $1,600.

Stipends are awarded in six-month increments and paid directly to the Montana certified infant toddler caregiver. A stipend is paid following the completion of each six-month period and must be requested within 30 days of the end of each six-month period.

Participants must provide direct care to infants/toddlers in the same licensed/registered child care facility for the majority of time the infants or toddlers the caregiver is responsible for attends.

Stipend Forfeiture

Participation in the Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend Program will be terminated and the stipend forfeited if any of the following occurs:

- The participant terminates their employment at any time during the 18-month stipend period.
- The facility closes at any time during the 18-month stipend period.
- CITC stipends are not transferable if a caregiver changes jobs or moves from one licensed or registered facility to another even if multiple licenses or registration certificates are under the same ownership.
  - Exceptions to this policy may be made on a case-by-case basis by contacting the Early Childhood Services Bureau Program Specialist.
- Fair hearing rights will be mailed with any termination notice.

Montana Department of
Public Health & Human Services

CHILD CARE

Section:
Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives

Subject:
Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend

Stipend Payment Schedule

Accepted into the program *January* first	**Payment may be requested:**	**Stipend Amount:**
After 6 months	July year-one	$300
After 12 months	January	$500
After 18 months	July year-two	$800
Total one-time stipend		**$1,600**
Accepted into the program *July* first	**Payment may be requested:**	**Stipend Amount:**
After 6 months	January year-one	$300
After 12 months	July	$500
After 18 months	January year-two	$800
Total one-time stipend		**$1,600**

Submitting a request for payment

CCUBS will generate and send a Certified Infant Toddler Stipend Summary Report form to active participants in the CITC Stipend Program approximately two weeks before the end of each six-month participation segment. The participant must complete the form and return it to the ECSB by the end of the month following the completion of the six-month segment. This report includes:

- A listing of the names and birth dates of the infants and toddlers in their care;
- An attestation of employment completed by the director/owner of the facility at which the participant works; and
- Verification that the participant remains an active member of the Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry.

  NOTE: Participation on the Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry may be verified on line through the Early Childhood Program's website ecp@montana.edu/personnel. A hard copy of the registry certificate is not required at this time. If a participant has allowed their registry participation to lapse, the stipend payment will be delayed until participation in the registry has been renewed.

CCUBS Process

1. Upon receipt of an application, ECSB Contract Specialist will check to verify the applicant is entered as a Person in the CCUBS system. Review the 'Person' screen to ensure the address matches the W-9 that was submitted with the CITC stipend application. If the applicant is not entered as a Person in CCUBS, the ECSB will enter this information based on the Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend Program application and W-9.

   NOTE: When navigating in CCUBS on the Contract Application screen, use the TAB key on the computer keyboard to move from box to box.

2. Applications are logged in on the CCUBS system when they are received in the ECSB office. This is done by entering information on the 'Contract Application' screen.

   Applicant ID: The applicant's PS #;
   Fed Fiscal Year: The appropriate federal fiscal year;
   Application Date: The date that information is being entered into CCUBS;
   Application Received: The date the application was date stamped;
   Contract Type: Infant Toddler Stipend;
   Application Status: Use the drop-down menu and select *Received*;
   Effective Date: The start of the 18-month time period;
   Denial Reason: Not used to enter in application requests;
   End Date: The end of the 18-month time period;
   Proposal Score: Not used to enter in application requests; and
   Application Checklist:
   Mark the *Training/Project Plan*.
   Select Provider Association: Highlight selected provider in which the applicant is working for.

3. Applications are prioritized and evaluated for participation in the program.

4. After the applications have been evaluated, the ECSB Program Specialist will update the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS. The 'Application Status' will be changed to either *Approved* or *Denied* and saved. If the status is *Denied*, the Program Specialist will also be required to enter a Denial Reason on the screen.

5. CCUBS will generate and automatically send an approval or denial letter to applicants.

6. Upon approval of the application, the ECSB Contract Specialist will set up the contract for all approved applicants following the steps below:
   a. On the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS, double click the box in the upper right hand corner labeled *Contract No.* This action will take the worker to the 'Contract screen'.
   b. On the Contractor tab, enter the PS# of the applicant in the white box under Person ID* and hit the TAB key.
   c. On to the Budget tab, put the cursor in the 'Budget Section' box. Select the Infant Toddler Stipend Program from Budget Section drop down menu. **Using the mouse** move the cursor into the 'Budget Item' box and enter the following four budget items (Budget Items may be typed in word-specifically or may be selected from a list using the F9 key):
      - *6-Month Stipend,* hit the TAB key and type $300.
      - *12-Month Stipend*, hit the TAB key and type $500.
      - *18-Month Stipend*, hit the TAB key and type $800.
      - *Advances*, hit the TAB key and type in 0.
      - Click on the SAVE icon.

      At this point, CCUBS will SAVE the screen with a Contract Number.
   d. On the 'Contract Details' tab select the Contract Status drop down menu: highlight *2. Negotiation Complete*, and SAVE; highlight *3. Final In-Route Signatures*, and SAVE; highlight *4. Mailed*, and SAVE; lastly highlight *5. Executed*, and SAVE.

7. Two-weeks prior to the end of each six-month segment, CCUBS will mail an automatic notice, the *Best Beginnings Infant Toddler Stipend Summary form*, to each approved applicant. The applicant must return the form to the ECSB by the end of the month following the completion of the six-month segment.

8. A termination notice will be sent out 10-days prior to terminating an applicant's participation in this program for not complying with program policies. Fair hearing rights will be sent with the termination notice.

What If Scenarios For Applicants/ Application Problem Resolution Process Or Denial Reasons

- If *a program applicant is not a Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver*, an alert will be sent to the Quality Specialist. The Quality Specialist will contact the caregiver by phone and verify their status. If it is determined that the individual is indeed a certified infant toddler caregiver, the Quality Specialist will be enter the appropriate status on the 'Person Montana' screen and the Contract Specialist will be notified to continue the application process.

  If the applicant has not completed the requirements to become a Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver, the application will be denied.

- If *a CITC program applicant is not associated with the facility specified on the application*, the Quality Specialist will call the applicant to determine which licensed or registered facility the applicant is actually working for. The Quality Specialist will:

  Inform the owner/director of the facility *indicated on the application* that their staff listing is not up to date.
  Inform the owner/director of the facility that *the applicant is erroneously attached to* that their staff listing is not up to date.

  Each owner/director must then contact the local QAD child care licensor and request that the provider staff screen be updated.

- If *the CITC program applicant is not associated with any facility*, the Quality Specialist will call the applicant to determine which licensed or registered facility the applicant is working for. The Quality Specialist will then:

  - Instruct the applicant to discuss this matter with their owner/director. (The Quality Specialist may choose to contact the owner/director directly as in the example listed above).

  The owner/director must then contact the local QAD child care licensor and request that the provider staff screen be updated. Once this is done, the Contract Specialist will be notified by the Quality Specialist to complete the application process.

  If the applicant is not working for a licensed or registered child care facility, the application will be denied.

- If *during the application login or contract payment process the facility license/registration is determined to be inactive*, an alert will be sent to the Quality Specialist. The Quality Specialist will notify the owner/director that their license/registration is inactive and it will be the responsibility of the provider to correct this. Once the correction has been made the provider will notify the Quality Specialist. The Quality Specialist will then instruct the Contract Specialist to complete the application or payment process.

  If the facility at which an applicant is employed is not licensed or registered, the application will be denied.

What If Scenarios For Program Participants/ Termination Of Program Participation

- If *a program participant is not currently associated with the same provider as was entered on the application,* an alert will be sent to the Quality Specialist. The Quality Specialist will determine if the participant has changed jobs and is now working for a different provider. If this is the case, a 10-day termination notice will be sent to the participant and their CITC contract will be closed.
- If *a program participant is not currently associated with a provider,* an alert will be sent to the Quality Specialist. The Quality Specialist will determine if the participant has quit their job. If this is the case, a 10-day termination notice will be sent to the participant and their CITC contract will be closed.
- If *a program participant is not currently associated with a Licensed or Registered Provider,* an alert will be sent to the Quality Specialist. The Quality Specialist will determine if the facility at which a CITC participant was employed, lost their license or registration certificate, or went out of business. If this is the case, a 10-day termination notice will be sent to the participant and their CITC contract will be closed.

Definitions & Special Requirements

Infant: A child under the age of 24 months.
Toddler: A child who is 24 months of age to 36 months of age.
Slot: Full time care, 6-10 hours per day, 30 or more hours per week on a regular basis.

Ratios: Facilities must follow the appropriate staff to child ratios as outlined in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) for infant care 37.95.1000-1021 – INFANT ONLY FACILITIES -

- Each facility caring for infants shall maintain a staff ratio of one caregiver for each (4) four infants in attendance.
- Each infant shall be assigned one primary caregiver.
- There shall be sufficient staff so that an adult is always present and supervising.

DEFINITIONS

(3) "Family day care home" means a place in which supplemental parental care is provided to three to six children, no more than 3 children less than 2 years of age unless care is provided for infants only. For places providing care only for infants, "family day care home" means a place in which supplemental parental care is provided for up to 4 infants. No other children shall be in attendance.

(5) "Group day care home" means a place in which supplemental parental care is provided to 7 to 12 children on a regular basis unless care is provided for infants only. For places providing care only for infants, "group day care home" means a place in which supplemental parental care is provided for up to 8 infants. No other children shall be in attendance. The staff: infant ratio applies to group day care homes.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings – Quality Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Provider Grants**

Supercedes: **Child Care Policy Manual Section 7-4 (7/01/03)**

References: **USCS (658G, 658E (c) (3) (B))**
MCA 52-2-711

General Information

The Child Care and Development Fund allows states to award grants and contracts for the purposes of planning, developing, improving or expanding child care services. Grants are awarded annually to providers in the following categories:

- Odd-hour or part-time care;
- Inclusion of children with disabilities;
- Rural care;
- Lack of licensed or registered care;
- Other community need;
- Improvements to meet applicable State and/or local Licensing/Registration requirements; or
- Before-and-after school child care programs for school-aged children.

Who May Apply

1. Child care providers participating in the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner registry that have achieved Level III or higher on the career path.

2. Public, private, for-profit or non-profit licensed/registered child care providers operating full-day, full-year programs. Child care providers must be licensed or registered by either the State of Montana, or a Montana tribe operating it's own child care licensing/registration program or a federally licensed program operating in the state of Montana such as exists on Malmstrom AFB. Applications may be submitted by child care family homes, child care group homes or child care centers.

    a. **NOTE:** Each of the seven Montana Tribes also receives direct child care funding through the CCDF. On-reservation child care providers must first contact their Tribal Block Grant Coordinator and certify that funds for this purpose are not available from the

Tribal Block Grant.

b. **NOTE**: Any child care provider who has been awarded a Best Beginnings Provider Grant between October 1, 2001 through September 30, 2004 and has participated in any of the three years is **not** eligible to apply before October 2007.

3. Groups or individuals who qualify on the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner registry as a **Level III** or higher practitioner on the Career Path and are interested in establishing a new licensed/registered child care facility.

How To Apply

Each year the Department issues a Request for Proposal (RFP). Interested individuals may request a copy of the RFP directly from DPHHS, or obtain a copy from the local CCR&R agency, Quality Assurance Division Child Care Licensure Specialist or local CACFP Food Program Sponsor. Applications and proposals are completed and returned to DPHHS by a summer deadline date.

Program Description and Expectations

1. Grants are awarded to providers who assure that at least 15% of their license or registration capacity is filled with Best Beginnings Scholarship children at the time the proposal is submitted. In addition, at least 20% of their license or registration capacity must be dedicated to serving this population during the grant period.

2. Providers must be licensed or registered on or before October 1 of the grant year. A copy of the child care license, registration certificate or application for license/registration is required as verification.

3. Providers must demonstrate a need for the proposed services -- by presenting evidence of the need in the community.

4. Child care providers or community groups submitting proposals must

describe how parents of the children enrolled in the program are involved in the planning and evaluation of the project.

5. Providers must demonstrate that the proposed project has been coordinated with community agencies and programs.

6. Funds are to be used to improve the quality of child care services or to expand child care services to serve Montana families and communities with unmet child care needs -- and must meet the physical, social, cognitive (language development), and creative development needs of the children served in age-appropriate ways.

7. Providers must agree to remain in operation for the length of the contract or return all grant funds.

8. Funds received need to be used exclusively for the purposes and approved expenses described in the contract between the provider and the Department.

9. Funds received under this grant must not be used to pay for construction of a facility, make permanent improvements (except for minor remodeling to meet state licensing), or purchase of vehicles. Funds may not be used as matching funds for federal funds; or to supplant or replace state, local or other funds.

10. TVs, video equipment or videos will not be allowed unless the purpose for their use is clearly defined and justified in relationship to the identified needs of the children and families served by the project.

11. Providers must not discriminate against children based on race, national origin, ethnic background, handicap, sex, or religion.

12. In selecting providers to receive awards, a higher priority will be given to providers who have not previously been funded under this DPHHS Provider Grants program.

13. Applications/proposals must include a clearly stated work plan with clear and measurable goals, objectives, and timelines. Proposals should clearly outline the methods proposed by the applicant to accomplish the goals and objectives.

14. Applications must be submitted on the application form attached to the RFP.

Maximum Grant Awards

Maximum amount of grants will be:

- Licensed Child Care Center $15,000 – 1st year, $12,500 – 2nd year, $10,000 – 3rd year,
- Group Child Care Home $10,000 – 1st year, $8,500 – 2nd year, $7,000 – 3rd year, and
- Family Child Care Home $5,000 – 1st year, $4,250 – 2nd year, $3,500 – 3rd year.

Contracts awarded under the Provider Grants RFP are renewable for up to three years based on performance standards.

This money is intended to be used for the actual cost of the improvements or expansion of the child care facility. Costs may include operational items such as additional staff, equipment or materials necessary for starting up or expanding the child care services.

Program Improvement Funds

Equipment and materials to be purchased must be developmentally appropriate -- and their purpose and use must be clearly identified in the proposal.

Special Requirements for School-Age Child Care Programs

School-age care proposals will be accepted from providers whose intent is to expand and improve the availability and quality of school-aged child care programs.

School-age child care proposals need to include a separate schedule of

activities targeted to various age groups. Activities that are different from usual school activities must be available.

School-aged child care proposals must clearly identify the number of additional children they will serve with the start-up or expansion grant funds. All of the requested/awarded funds must go to either the start-up or the expansion of the facility that will provide before-or-after school child care.

Special Requirements for Improvements to Meet Licensing/ Registration Requirements

Consideration will be given to providers who submit proposals to meet applicable State or local licensing/registration requirements. Proposals that are requesting funds for minor remodeling/renovation costs in order to meet state/local licensing requirements must include documentation from the local Quality Assurance Division child care licensing staff or other appropriate community professional such as a county health worker or Fire Marshall, that such remodeling/renovation work is necessary to meet licensing or registration requirements.

A statement from the QAD Child Care Licensure Specialist or a county health worker that remodeling/renovation is necessary to meet licensing requirements does not in any way guarantee that a proposal will be funded.

Billing the State for Provider Grant Payment

Providers receiving a grant must bill the Department on a "Monthly Invoice Billing Statement" (MIBS). This form is generated on the CCUBS system and mailed to the provider on a monthly basis for completion. Providers may bill the Department on either a monthly or quarterly basis depending on the nature of their project.

20% Service Level for State Assisted Children

Providers participating in the Child Care Provider Grants program are required to assure that a minimum of 20% of their license or registration capacity will be filled by children who are receiving services under the Best Beginnings Scholarship program.

In order to receive payment on a provider grant contract, this level of service

must be met on a monthly basis and reported to the ECSB. This is done on the Monthly Invoice Billing Statement (MIBS). Exceptions may be made to this policy if the provider submits in writing a reasonable explanation for not meeting the 20% level of service. (See next section)

20% of the license capacity is determined based on the facility's service hours for any given month. The service hours are determined by multiplying the number of operating days in the month x 6 hours per day x the license capacity.

Child Care Day = 6 hours of care per day.
License or registration capacity = the maximum number of children a facility is authorized to care for by the State of Montana's Child Care Licensing program, excluding overlap.

EXAMPLE: A child care facility is registered for 12 children and there are 21 working days in a month.

12 children x 6 hours per day = 72 service hours per day
72 service hours x 21 working days = 1512 service hours per month.
1512 hours x 20% = 302 hours of service needed for state assisted children in order to qualify for grant payments.

Requesting Payment if 20% of the Service Hours Are Not Met

There may be times when a provider-grant contractor cannot fulfill the requirement to serve Best Beginnings Scholarship children at the 20% of capacity level. Payment on a contract will not be delayed if the provider offers a reasonable explanation and written documentation for the situation. Common reasons for not meeting the 20% service level include but are not limited to the following:

1. Slots are filled by Best Beginnings Scholarship children but service is not provided because of a temporary absence. (Illness, family vacations, etc.)

2. The monthly service hours at a facility are different from the number of

days calculated by the ECSB and the provider has written proof of the actual monthly service hours.

3. The facility has openings and is in the process of recruiting. The Best Beginnings Scholarship "slots" must be reserved for qualifying children and filled as quickly as possible. This is common in the case of a new business.

4. The facility must meet licensing requirements before children may be enrolled. The Best Beginnings Scholarship "slots" must be reserved for qualifying children and filled as quickly as possible once the licensing issues have been resolved. Resolution of licensing issues is often a component of a grant.

Payment on a contract would be withheld or delayed if a facility was full and did not meet the 20% required service to Best Beginnings Scholarship children. These providers are not eligible to receive payment until this situation changes to meet the requirements of the grant funding.

Reporting Participation

The CCUBS computer system will determine the monthly service hours, and the required hours needed to meet the 20% requirement and include those figures on the Monthly Invoice Billing Statement (MIBS). Contractors must enter the number of days their facility was providing service on the appropriate line of the Best Beginnings Provider Grant statement.

If the hours of care are fewer than the required 20% then the provider must attach an explanation.

Reporting Expenses for Reimbursement

Contractors must report their monthly expenses on the Best Beginnings Provider Grant statement in order to receive reimbursement for their grant project. Proof of expenditures must be included. (i.e. Receipts, copies of payroll records, invoices, etc.)

Requesting an Advance

Contractors may request a 30-day advance on a contract payment using the Best Beginnings Provider Grant statement. Advances must be reconciled at the end of the 30-day period. Contractors reconcile advances by submitting proof of expenditure. (i.e. Receipts, copies of payroll records, invoices, etc.)

Contractors failing to reconcile the advance within the 30-day period may not receive further payments on their contract until the advance is reconciled.

Quarterly Reporting

Contractors must complete and submit to the Early Childhood Services Bureau a quarterly report that provides information on the progress of the Provider Grant project. Quarterly reports are due on January 15, April 15, August 15, and October 15.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings – Quality Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Mini Grants**

Supercedes: **Section 7-4a (07/01/03)**

References: **USCS (658g, 658e (c) (3) (B),**
MCA 52-2-711
Child Care State Plan Section 5.5

General Information

The DPHHS, Early Childhood Services Bureau is dedicated to supporting child care providers who demonstrate a strong link to professionalism in the field of early childhood and a commitment to providing high quality care in safe and healthy environments.

The Best Beginnings Mini Grants will be awarded from the Child Care and Development Fund, which allows states to award grants and contracts for the purposes of planning, developing, improving or expanding child care services. These mini grants are designed to cover cost of training (CPR, business training, etc.), equipment, supplies, and/or meeting regulatory requirements.

Who May Apply

- Currently established licensed or registered child care providers, or
- Groups or individuals interested in establishing a new licensed/registered child care facility. Child Care providers must be licensed or registered before grant funds are released. A copy of the child care license or registration certificate is required for verification.

➢ Additionally,

- Providers must be registered with the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry and be placed at any level on the Career Path. Providers must include a copy of their certificate with application.
- Providers who have been disqualified with cause from the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) may not apply for a Best Beginnings Mini Grant.
- Providers may only receive one mini grant per fiscal year.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings – Quality Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Mini Grants**

How to Apply

Each year the Department issues a two-page application with attachments, for the mini grant. Interested individuals may request an application from the local CCR&R agency, Quality Assurance Division Child Care Licensure Specialist or local CACFP Food Program Sponsor.

- Applications are returned to DPHHS on a quarterly basis. In order to be considered for the quarter a provider is applying applications must be postmarked by the following dates: first quarter – September 1; second quarter – December 1; third quarter – March 1; fourth quarter – June 1. Mail application with attachments to: DPHHS, Early Childhood Services Bureau, PO Box 202952, Helena, MT 59620-2952.
- These mini grants will be awarded quarterly and applicants will be notified by October 1 for first quarter, January 1 for second quarter, April 1 for third quarter, and July 1 for fourth quarter.

Program Description and Expectations

1. Applications must be complete.
2. The narrative must include an overview and explanation of any program enhancement and a description of the Knowledge Base areas the project is addressing.
3. Funds received under this grant must not be used to pay personnel expenses other than substitute care to enable a provider and/or staff to attend trainings.
4. Televisions are not an allowed expenditure.
5. In selecting providers to receive awards, a higher priority will be given to providers who are serving children under the State's Best Beginnings Scholarship Program and to providers who have not previously been funded under the DPHHS Provider Grants Program.
6. Providers who are awarded a Best Beginnings mini grant must agree to remain in business as a current licensed or registered provider for 12 months from date of award or return all grant funds.
7. Providers must not discriminate against children based on race, national origin, ethnic background, handicap, sex or religion.
8. Providers who do not receive a grant may reapply the next quarter. The second page of the application may be used as a communication

tool for asking questions and receiving feedback on a proposal. The ECSB will respond to in writing to inquiries received in writing.

NOTE: Possible denial reasons: currently participating in the Best Beginnings Provider Grant program; low narrative score; not an active member of the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry; and/or incomplete application.

Maximum Grant Awards

The maximum award amounts for mini grants are:

- $1,500 for a Licensed Child Care Center;
- $1,000 for a Group Child Care Home; and
- $1,000 for a Family Child Care Home.

Invoicing for Payment

The award payment will be made on a one-time reimbursement basis only. Expenditures prior to the time the grant was awarded are not allowed.

A summary form will be sent with the provider's award notice. This summary form is to be completed and returned with receipts to the Early Childhood Services Bureau for reimbursement.

Best Beginnings Mini Grants will be payable up to one year from the date of the award.

CCUBS Process

1. Upon receipt of an application, ECSB Contract Specialist will check to verify the applicant is entered as a Person and as a Provider in the CCUBS system. Review the 'Provider' screen to ensure the address matches the W-9 that was submitted with the Mini Grant application. If the applicant is not entered as a Person in CCUBS, the ECSB will enter this information based on the Mini Grant application and W-9.

   NOTE: When navigating in CCUBS on the Contract Application screen, use the TAB key on the computer keyboard to move from box to box.

2. Applications are logged in on the CCUBS system when they are received in the ECSB office. This is done by entering information on the 'Contract Application' screen.

   Applicant ID: The applicant's PV #;
   Fed Fiscal Year: The appropriate federal fiscal year;
   Application Date: The date that information is being entered into CCUBS;
   Application Received: The date the application was date stamped;
   Contract Type: Mini Grant;
   Application Status: Use the drop-down menu and select *Received*;
   Effective Date: The start of the 12-month time period;
   Denial Reason: Not used to enter in application requests;
   End Date: The end of the 12-month time period;
   Proposal Score: Not used to enter in application requests; and
   Application Checklist:
   Mark the Training/Project Plan.

3. Applications are prioritized and evaluated for participation in the program. Applications with the highest scores are awarded the mini grant. Approximately 25 mini grants are awarded each quarter. The score is then entered on the Contract Application screen in the CCUBS system and the status is changed to either approved or denied.

4. After the applications have been evaluated, the ECSB Program Specialist will update the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS. The 'Application Status' will be changed to either *Approved* or *Denied* and saved. If the status is *Denied*, the Program Specialist will also be required to enter a Denial Reason on the screen.

5. CCUBS will generate and automatically send a denial letter to the applicant.

6. Upon approval of the application, the ECSB Contract Specialist will set up the contract for all approved applicants following the steps

below:

a. On the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS, double click the box in the upper right hand corner labeled *Contract No.* This action will take the worker to the 'Contract screen'.
b. On the Contractor tab, enter the PS# of the applicant in the white box under Person ID* and hit the TAB key.
c. On to the Budget tab, put the cursor in the 'Budget Section' box. Select the Mini Grant from Budget Section drop down menu. **Using the mouse** move the cursor into the 'Budget Item' box and enter the budget items (Budget Items may be typed in word-specifically or may be selected from a list using the F9 key):
   - *Ex: Training,* hit the TAB key and type amount.
   - *Complete for each budget item.*
   - *Advances*, hit the TAB key and type in 0.
   - Click on the SAVE icon.

   At this point, CCUBS will SAVE the screen with a Contract Number.
d. On the 'Contract Details' tab select the Contract Status drop down menu: highlight *2. Negotiation Complete*, and SAVE; highlight *3. Final In-Route Signatures*, and SAVE; highlight *4. Mailed*, and SAVE; lastly highlight *5. Executed*, and SAVE.

7. CCUBS will generate an award letter that must be printed in the ECSB contract office. In CCUBS, Select *Navigate To*, *Notifications*, Enter the Contract Number and hit *Execute [F8]*. To view the notice, click on *View Notice*. Award letters are sent to the successful applicant along with a Best Beginnings Mini-Grant Award Summary.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Merit Pay 1**

Supersedes: **Child Care Policy Manual Section 7.5 – (05/01/05)**

References: **USCS (658G, 658E (C) (3) (B)) ARM 37.80.602**

General Information

The Montana Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), Merit Pay 1 program was developed with the goal of improving the quality of services provided to young children, by supporting early childhood professionals participating in an early childhood/child development training and education.

All applications are reviewed independently; therefore, each qualifying staff person in a licensed or registered child care facility may be eligible to receive an award.

Merit Pay 1 Eligibility

Early childhood professionals must be working a minimum of 15 hours a week in:

- A registered group or family child care home,
- A licensed child care center,

Applicants must also be current members of the Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry.

Qualifying individuals who are in the process of applying for child care licensure or registration may apply for Merit Pay 1; however, award funds will not be released unless the licensure/registration process is completed. (The establishment of a PV number in CCUBS provides the necessary verification.)

Merit Pay 1 will be awarded to approved applicants participating in one of two tracks:

1. A 23-hour Track. (Participants completing and verifying 23 hours of pre-approved early childhood training will receive an award of $250.00)

2. A 50-hour Track. (Participants completing and verifying 50 hours of pre-approved early childhood training will receive an award of $500.00)

Merit Pay 1 Application Process

Merit Pay 1 applications are available during the month of August and usually the first week of September. Merit Pay 1 applications are available at all Child Care Resource and Referral agencies and at the ECSB.

Merit Pay 1 applications are due in the ECSB no later than 5:00 PM on the stated date in September for each award year. Applicants will be informed by October 1 of each award year regarding the approval or denial of their application.

Individuals may only apply for one Merit Pay program; multiple applications will be automatically denied. Additionally, applicants must indicate which Merit Pay 1 track (23-hour or 50-hour) they wish to participate in.

Application forms must be complete and include all required information and signatures in order to be considered. A complete application must include the following:

1. Proof of employment at a qualifying facility including a child care facility's PV number and the owner/director's signature attesting to the fact the applicant is employed at the facility;
2. An applicant signature;
3. A listing of all proposed training on a Merit Pay 1 Plan of Study (form CC-104a); and
4. A completed form W-9.

The Merit Pay 1 application and Plan of Study are submitted to DPHHS/ECSB for approval. Applicants are selected for participation in the Merit Pay 1 program, based upon the content and quality of their application, their priority ranking and availability of funds.

- If a participant does not complete the approved Plan of Study required for the Merit Pay 1, she/he will not receive the Merit Pay 1 award.

- All training and education must address one or more components of the Early Childhood Knowledge Base. The Early Childhood Knowledge Base describes the early childhood competencies an early childhood professional must possess in order to offer high quality early care and education. Training and education may include:
    1. Child Development Associate (CDA) training,
    2. Workshop sessions or other non-credit bearing, early childhood training approved through the Montana Early Care & Education Career Development Training Approval System,

3. Child and Adult Care Food Program training in excess of the four hours required for participation in that program, as long as the training has been approved through the Montana Early Care & Education Career Development Training Approval System.

The eight hours of training required as a condition of licensure or registration, or to qualify to be an aide or a teacher, in a center is allowed. The hours associated with CPR/First Aid do not count toward the eight hours of mandatory licensing training and will not be counted for Merit Pay 1.

Priority for Merit Pay 1

Merit Pay 1 priority will be given to participants who:

1. Early childhood professionals who have not previously received the award and are participating in training that leads to completion of a credential such as a Child Development Associate, (CDA), or accreditation through the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCCA) or the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

2. Early childhood professionals who have not previously received Merit Pay 1, who have not completed a credential in early childhood education or a related field, and who are participating in training in one or more of the Montana Early Care & Education Knowledge Base content areas.

3. Early childhood professionals who have previously received a Merit Pay award and are participating in training that leads to completion of a credential, such as a CDA or accreditation through the National Association of Family Child Care.

4. Early childhood professionals who have not completed a credential in early childhood education or a related field and who have received Merit Pay in the past, who are completing appropriate early care and education training.

5. Early childhood professionals who have completed a credential in early childhood education or a related field.

Note: A credential is defined as a Child Development Associate (CDA), accreditation, Child Care Development Specialist (CCDS) Apprenticeship, an Associates of Arts (AA) degree, a Bachelor of Arts

(BA) degree, a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree, or other higher education degree.

Merit Pay 1 Summary And Proof Of Training Completion.

Participants may request payment of their Merit Pay 1 award when they complete the pre-approved training/education. Participants can access their training records by logging on the Early Childhood Project's website and downloading their personal training record or by calling the Early Childhood Project. This information may be obtained at the following web address and phone number:

www.montana.edu/ecp
or by calling 1-800-213-6310

Submit all supporting documentation to:

ECSB
P.O. Box 202925
Helena, MT 59620-2925

Merit Pay 1 recipients are required to be current members of the Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry. If a participant did not submit a copy of their Montana Practitioner's Registry Certificate at the time of application, they must provide that information when they request their award.

Additionally, participants that were in the process of becoming licensed or registered when they applied for Merit Pay 1, but had not yet completed that process, will need to show proof that a license or registration certificate has been granted before Merit Pay 1 funds will be released.

In order to receive a Merit Pay 1 Award, participants are required to submit a signed summary form that includes an attestation stating that they are working in a facility approved for Merit Pay 1 participation. This form must also be signed by the appropriate owner/director; and include the following attachments:

- Proof of approved training/education from the Early Childhood Project.
- A current copy of their Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry certificate (If a current copy is not already on file); and
- A current copy of their Montana child care license or registration certificate. (If Merit Pay 1 was granted pending completion of a child

care license or registration certificate).

Approved Merit Pay 1 training/education must be completed within the program year, which is August 1 through August 31. For example, August 1, 2006 through August 31, 2007. Extensions will not be granted.

CCUBS Process

Upon receipt of an application the ECSB Contract Specialist will verify the applicant is entered as a 'Person' in the CCUBS system; and review the 'Person' screen to ensure the address matches the address on the Merit Pay 1 application and on the attached W-9. If the applicant is not input as a 'Person' in CCUBS, the ECSB will enter this information based on the Merit Pay 1 application and W-9.

NOTE: Use the TAB key on the computer keyboard when navigating in CCUBS from box to box on the 'Contract Application' screen.

1. Applications are logged in on the CCUBS system when they are received in the ECSB office. This is done by entering information on the 'Contract Application' screen.

CCUBS Field	Appropriate Entry
Applicant ID:	The applicant's PS number
Fed Fiscal Year	The appropriate federal fiscal year
Application Date	The date that information is being entered into CCUBS
Application Received	The date the application was date stamped
Contract Type	Merit Pay 1 (MRP)
Application Status	Use the drop-down menu and select *Received*;
Effective Date	08-01- [year of application];
Denial Reason	Not used to enter in application requests
End Date	08-31-[year when training must be completed];
Proposal Score	Not used when entering application requests
Application Checklist	Mark the *Training/Project*

	Plan.

2. Applications are prioritized and evaluated for participation in the program.

3. After the applications have been evaluated, the ECSB Program Specialist will update the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS. The 'Application Status' will be changed to either *Approved* or *Denied* and saved. If the status is *denied*, the Program Specialist will also be required to enter a denial reason on the screen.

4. CCUBS will generate, and automatically send a denial letter to unsuccessful applicants.

5. Upon approval of the application, the ECSB Contract Specialist will set up the contract for all approved applicants following the steps below:

    a. On the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS, double click the box in the upper right hand corner labeled *Contract No.* This action will take the worker to the 'Contract' screen.

    b. On the 'Contractor' tab, enter the PS number of the applicant in the white box under Person ID* and hit the TAB key.

    c. On the 'Budget' tab, put the cursor in the 'Budget Section' box. Select the Merit Pay 1[FFY] from the Budget Section drop down menu. **Using the mouse** move the cursor into the 'Budget Item' box and enter the following three budget items (Budget Items may be typed in word-specifically or may be selected from a list using the F9 key):
        - *Training,* hit the TAB key and type $250 or $500.
        - *Advances* hit the TAB key and type in 0.
        - Click on the SAVE icon.

        At this point, CCUBS will SAVE the screen with a Contract Number

    d. On the 'Contract Details' tab select the Contract Status drop down menu: highlight *2. Negotiation Complete*, and SAVE; highlight *3. Final In-Route Signatures*, and SAVE; highlight *4. Mailed*, and SAVE; lastly highlight *5. Executed*, and SAVE.

6. Letters of approval must be printed in the ECSB central office so that a *Merit Pay 1 Summary* form can be attached and sent to the applicant. In CCUBS, navigate to 'Notifications' and enter the contract number in the appropriate column, hit Execute [F8]. Click on 'View Notification' and print the approval letter from this PDF document.

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Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Higher Education Merit Pay**

Supersedes: **Child Care Policy Manual Section 7.5 (5/01/05)**

References: **USCS (658G, 658E (C) (3) (B)) ARM 37.80.602**

General Information

The Montana Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), Higher Education Merit Pay program was developed with the goal of improving the quality of services provided to young children, by supporting early childhood professionals who are enrolled in an early childhood/child development college based program.

All applications are reviewed independently; therefore, each qualifying staff person in a licensed or registered child care facility may be eligible to receive an award.

Higher Education Merit Pay Eligibility

Early childhood professionals must be working a minimum of 15 hours a week in:

- ☐ A registered group or family child care home,
- ☐ A licensed child care center,
- ☐ A Montana Head Start, Early Head Start or Tribal Head Start, or
- ☐ A Montana Child Care Resource & Referral Agency.

Applicants must also be current members of the Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry.

Qualifying individuals who are in the process of applying for child care licensure or registration may apply for Higher Ed. Merit Pay; however, award funds will not be released unless the licensure/registration process is completed. (The establishment of a PV number in CCUBS provides the necessary verification.)

Higher Education Merit Pay will be awarded to approved applicants participating in at least six college credits per semester. Individuals may receive this award in each of two semesters per year for an award of $750.00 per semester and a maximum award of $1,500.00.

To receive a Higher Education Merit Pay award, applicants must be participating in a college program that leads to a credential or degree in Early Childhood/Child Development. They may also be participating in a college program that emphasizes Early Childhood and leads to a Level IV or higher on

the Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry.

Higher Ed. Merit Pay Application Process

Higher Ed. Merit Pay applications will be available for one semester during the months of April, due back in June, and available again for another semester during the month October, due back again in November. Higher Ed Merit Pay applications are available at all Child Care Resource and Referral agencies and at the ECSB.

Higher Ed. Merit Pay applications are due in the ECSB no later than 5:00 PM on the stated date in June and the stated due date in October. Applicants will be notified within one month of the application due date of each award period regarding the approval or denial of their application.

Individuals may only apply for one Merit Pay program; multiple applications will be automatically denied.

Application forms must be complete and include all required information and signatures in order to be considered. A complete application must include the following:

1. Proof of employment at a qualifying facility including a child care facility's PV number and the owner/director's signature attesting to the fact the applicant is employed at the facility;
2. An applicant signature;
3. A letter of intent;
4. A listing of all training on a Higher Ed. Merit Pay Plan of Study (form CC-104c); and
5. The amount of financial aide and/or funding the applicant is eligible for and expects to receive. Examples include:
    a. Full or partial Federal Pell Grants,
    b. Family Care Network support,
    c. Child Care Resource and Referral support,
    d. Indian Fee Waiver,
    e. Head Start or Early Head Start support,
    f. State of Montana Best Beginnings grants,
    g. Other scholarships or financial assistance.
6. A completed form W-9.

The Higher Ed. Merit Pay application and Plan of Study are submitted to DPHHS/ECSB for approval. Applicants are selected for participation in the Higher Ed. Merit Pay program, based upon the content and quality of their

application, their priority ranking and availability of funds.

- ☐ If a participant does not complete the approved Plan of Study required for the Higher Education Merit Pay, she/he will not receive the Higher Ed. Merit Pay award. For example, if the applicant is approved for six semester credits and they do not complete the six semester credits, they will not qualify for any Higher Ed. Merit Pay funds.

- ☐ All coursework should address one or more components of the Early Childhood Knowledge Base. The Early Childhood Knowledge Base describes the early childhood competencies an early childhood professional must possess in order to offer high quality early care and education.

- ☐ All coursework for undergraduate practitioners must be completed at a regionally accredited higher education institute that is located in Montana and recognized by the Montana Board of Regents.

- ☐ Coursework for graduate practitioners may be completed at a higher education institution that is not located in Montana. However, such an institution must be accredited and recognized by the Montana Board of Regents.

- ☐ Upon completion of an approved *first semester Plan of Study*, the applicant must submit a transcript of their completed courses in order to receive their first semester award. (An unofficial copy of the transcript is acceptable.)

- ☐ If an applicant has been approved for two semesters of Higher Ed. Merit Pay, they will also submit a Plan of Study for the second semester. At the end of the second semester, they will submit transcripts for the courses completed to receive their second semester award.

Priority for Higher Education Merit Pay

Priority for Higher Ed Merit Pay is first ranked according to how much financial assistance the individual has assess to then given in the following order:

NOTE: Applicants will not be eligible for Higher Ed. Merit Pay if receiving <u>full funding</u> from Pell Grants, Head Start, or other sources

1. Providers who have previously received the award and have not completed a credential in early childhood education or a related field and, are continuing in college coursework that leads to completion of a CDA credential, a CCDS Apprenticeship Certificate, a degree in Early Childhood/Child Development, or are participating in a higher education program that emphasizes Early Childhood and will lead to a Level IV or higher on the Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry.

2. Providers who have not previously received the award and are participating in college coursework that leads to completion of a CDA credential, a CCDS Apprenticeship Certificate, a degree in Early Childhood/Child Development, or participating in a higher education program that emphasizes Early Childhood and will lead to a Level IV or higher on the Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry.

   When all factors for priority two are equal, then Child Care Development Specialist Apprentices who are registered with the Montana Department of Labor Apprenticeship & Training program will receive first consideration.

3. Providers *who* have not previously received the award and have not completed a credential in early childhood education or a related field and, who are participating in college coursework that will enhance a direct care provider's ability to work with young children, such as: child development, child guidance, health and safety, and developmentally appropriate practices.

4. Providers who have previously received the award and have not completed a credential in early childhood education or a related field *and*, who are participating in college coursework that will directly enhance a care providers ability to work with young children such as: child development, child guidance, health and safety, and developmentally appropriate practices.

5. Providers who have previously received the award and have completed a credential in early childhood education or a related field, who are participating in college coursework that will directly enhance a care providers ability to work with young children such as: child development, child guidance, health and safety, and developmentally appropriate practices.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Higher Education Merit Pay**

Higher Education Merit Pay Summary And Proof Of Training Completion.

Participants may request payment of their Higher Ed. Merit Pay award when they complete a semester of approved coursework. (a minimum of 6 credits)

Higher Education Merit Pay participants are required to be current members of the Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry. If a participant did not submit a copy of their Montana Practitioner's Registry Certificate at the time of application, they must provide that information when they request their award.

Additionally, participants that were in the process of becoming licensed or registered when they applied for Higher Ed. Merit Pay, but had not yet completed that process, will need to show proof that a license or registration certificate has been granted before Higher Ed. Merit Pay funds will be released.

In order to receive any Higher Ed. Merit Pay Award, participants are required to submit a signed summary form that includes an attestation stating that they are working in a facility approved for Higher Ed. Merit Pay participation. This form must also be signed by the appropriate owner/director; and include the following attachments:

- ☐ An official or unofficial college transcript from the semester that was just completed (This document provides proof of completion of the courses listed on the Plan of Study);
- ☐ A current copy of their Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry certificate (If a current copy is not already on file); and
- ☐ A current copy of their Montana child care license or registration certificate. (If Higher Ed Merit Pay was granted pending completion of a child care license or registration certificate).

Approved Higher Ed Merit Pay college coursework must be completed within the program year, August 1 to August 31 of the following year. For example, August 1, 2006 through August 31, 2007. Extensions will not be granted.

CCUBS Process

Upon receipt of an application the ECSB Contract Specialist will verify the applicant is entered as a 'Person' in the CCUBS system; and review the 'Person' screen to ensure the address matches the address on the Higher Ed. Merit Pay application and on the attached W-9. If the applicant is not input as a 'Person' in CCUBS, the ECSB will enter this information based on the Higher Ed. Merit Pay application and W-9.

NOTE: Use the TAB key on the computer keyboard when navigating in CCUBS from box to box on the 'Contract Application' screen.

1. Applications are logged in on the CCUBS system when they are received in the ECSB office. This is done by entering information on the 'Contract Application' screen.

CCUBS Field	Appropriate Entry
Applicant ID:	The applicant's PS number
Fed Fiscal Year	The appropriate federal fiscal year
Application Date	The date that information is being entered into CCUBS
Application Received	The date the application was date stamped
Contract Type	Higher Ed. Merit Pay (MRHE)
Application Status	Use the drop-down menu and select *Received*;
Effective Date	08-01- [year of application];
Denial Reason	Not used to enter in application requests
End Date	08-31-[year when training must be completed];
Proposal Score	Not used when entering application requests
Application Checklist	Mark the *Training/Project Plan*.

2. Applications are prioritized and evaluated for participation in the program.

3. After the applications have been evaluated, the ECSB Program Specialist will update the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS. The 'Application Status' will be changed to either *Approved* or *Denied* and saved. If the status is *denied*, the Program Specialist will also be required to enter a denial reason on the screen.

4. CCUBS will generate, and automatically send a denial letter to unsuccessful applicants.

5. Upon approval of the application, the ECSB Contract Specialist will set up the contract for all approved applicants following the steps below:

    a. On the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS, double click the box in the upper right hand corner labeled *Contract No.* This action will take the worker to the 'Contract' screen.

    b. On the 'Contractor' tab, enter the PS number of the applicant in the white box under Person ID* and hit the TAB key.

    c. On the 'Budget' tab, put the cursor in the 'Budget Section' box. Select the Higher Ed Merit Pay [FFY] from the Budget Section drop down menu. **Using the mouse** move the cursor into the 'Budget Item' box and enter the following three budget items (Budget Items may be typed in word-specifically or may be selected from a list using the F9 key):
        - *Training-Semester 1,* hit the TAB key and type $750
        - *Training –Semester 2,* hit the TAB key and type $750.
        - *Advances* hit the TAB key and type in 0.
        - Click on the SAVE icon.

        At this point, CCUBS will SAVE the screen with a Contract Number

NOTE: An individual may be approved for one semester for a total award of $750 or two semesters for a total award of $1500. The budget entry should accurately reflect the award the participant was granted.

    d. On the 'Contract Details' tab select the Contract Status drop down menu: highlight *2. Negotiation Complete*, and SAVE; highlight *3. Final In-Route Signatures*, and SAVE; highlight *4. Mailed*, and SAVE; lastly highlight *5. Executed*, and SAVE.

6. Letters of approval must be printed in the ECSB central office so that a Higher *Ed. Merit Pay Summary* form can be attached and sent to the applicant. In CCUBS, navigate to 'Notifications' and enter the contract number in the appropriate column, hit Execute [F8]. Click on 'View Notification' and print the approval letter from this PDF document.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Infant Toddler Merit Pay**

Supersedes: **Child Care Policy Manual Section 7.5 (05/01/05)**

References: **USCS (658G, 658E (C) (3) (B)) ARM 37.80.602**

General Information

The Montana Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), Infant Toddler Merit Pay program was developed with the goal of improving the quality of services provided to infants and toddlers by encouraging child care providers and care givers to participate in additional training.

Early childhood professionals who work a minimum or 15 hours a week in a registered group or family child care home or a licensed child care center may apply to participate in pre-approved infant toddler training that leads to certification as a *Montana Certified Infant/Toddler Caregiver.*

In addition, applicants must be current members of the Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry.

Infant Toddler Merit Pay Eligibility

Early childhood professionals must be working a minimum of 15 hours a week in:

- A registered group or family child care home,
- A licensed child care center,

Applicants must also be current members of the Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry.

Qualifying individuals who are in the process of applying for child care licensure or registration may apply for Infant Toddler Merit Pay; however, award funds will not be released unless the licensure/registration process is completed. (The establishment of a PV number in CCUBS provides the necessary verification.)

Infant Toddler Merit Pay will be awarded to approved applicants completing all four modules of the Infant Toddler training, and attain Montana Infant Toddler Caregiver Certification.

Caregivers who have achieved the Montana Infant Toddler Caregiver certification are ineligible to participate in the Infant Toddler Merit pay program.

Infant Toddler Merit Pay Application Process

Infant Toddler Merit Pay applications are available during the month of August and usually the first week of September. Infant Toddler Merit Pay applications are available at all Child Care Resource and Referral agencies and at the ECSB.

Infant Toddler Merit Pay applications are due in the ECSB no later than 5:00 PM on the stated date in September for each award year. Applicants will be informed by October 1 of each award year regarding the approval or denial of their application.

Individuals may only apply for one Merit Pay program; multiple applications will be automatically denied.

Application forms must be complete and include all required information and signatures in order to be considered. A complete application must include the following:

1. Proof of employment at a qualifying facility including a child care facility's PV number and the owner/director's signature attesting to the fact the applicant is employed at the facility;
2. An applicant signature;
3. A listing of all training on an Infant Toddler Merit Pay Plan of Study (form CC-104b); and,
4. A completed W-9 form.

The Infant Toddler Merit Pay application and Plan of Study are submitted to DPHHS/ECSB for approval. Applicants are selected for participation in the Infant Toddler Merit Pay program, based upon the content and quality of their application, their priority ranking, and availability of funds.

- If a participant does not complete the approved Plan of Study, (all four modules of the Infant Toddler training), required for the Infant Toddler Merit Pay, and attain Infant Toddler Certification, she/he will not will not qualify for any Infant Toddler Merit Pay funds.

- Upon completion of the approved Infant Toddler Plan of Study, the applicant must submit a copy of their Infant Toddler Certified Caregiver Certificate in order to receive their Infant Toddler Merit Pay award.

Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Infant Toddler Merit Pay**

Priority for Infant Toddler Merit Pay

Infant Toddler Merit Pay priority will be given to participants who:

1. Providers who have not previously received the Infant Toddler Merit Pay award and are participating in training that leads to completion of the Montana Infant Toddler Certified Caregiver certification and are currently working with infants and toddlers.

2. Providers who have not previously received the Infant Toddler Merit Pay award and are participating in training that leads to completion of the Montana Infant Toddler Certified Caregiver certification and are not currently working with infants and toddlers.

Infant Toddler Merit Pay Summary And Proof Of Training Completion.

Participants may request payment of their Infant Toddler Merit Pay award when they complete the approved Infant Toddler coursework.

Infant Toddler Merit Pay participants are required to be current members of the Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry. If a participant did not submit a copy of their Montana Practitioner's Registry Certificate at the time of application, they must provide that information when they request their award.

Additionally, participants who were in the process of becoming licensed or registered when they applied for Infant Toddler Merit Pay, but had not yet completed that process, will need to show proof that a license or registration certificate has been granted before Infant Toddler. Merit Pay funds will be released.

In order to receive any Infant Toddler Merit Pay Award, participants are required to submit a signed summary form that includes an attestation stating that they are working in a licensed or registered child care facility. This form must also be signed by the appropriate owner/director; and include the following attachments:

- A copy of their Infant Toddler Certified Caregiver Certificate.
- A current copy of their Montana Early Care & Education Practitioner's Registry certificate (If a current copy is not already on file); and
- A current copy of their Montana child care license or registration certificate. (If Infant Toddler Merit Pay was granted pending completion of a child care license or registration certificate).

Approved Infant Toddler Merit Pay training must be completed within the program year, which is August 1 through August 31. For example, August 1, 2006 through August 31, 2007. Extensions will not be granted.

CCUBS Process

Upon receipt of an application the ECSB Contract Specialist will verify the applicant is entered as a 'Person' in the CCUBS system; and review the 'Person' screen to ensure the address matches the address on the Infant Toddler Merit Pay application and on the attached W-9. If the applicant is not input as a 'Person' in CCUBS, the ECSB will enter this information based on the Infant Toddler Merit Pay application and W-9.

NOTE: Use the TAB key on the computer keyboard when navigating in CCUBS from box to box on the 'Contract Application' screen.

1. Applications are logged in on the CCUBS system when they are received in the ECSB office. This is done by entering information on the 'Contract Application' screen.

CCUBS Field	Appropriate Entry
Applicant ID:	The applicant's PS number
Fed Fiscal Year	The appropriate federal fiscal year
Application Date	The date that information is being entered into CCUBS
Application Received	The date the application was date stamped
Contract Type	Infant Toddler Merit Pay (MRIT)
Application Status	Use the drop-down menu and select *Received*;
Effective Date	08-01- [year of application];
Denial Reason	Not used to enter in application requests
End Date	08-31-[year when training must be completed];
Proposal Score	Not used when entering application requests
Application Checklist	Mark the *Training/Project*

	Plan.

2. Applications are prioritized and evaluated for participation in the program.

3. After the applications have been evaluated, the ECSB Program Specialist will update the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS. The 'Application Status' will be changed to either *Approved* or *Denied* and saved. If the status is *denied*, the Program Specialist will also be required to enter a denial reason on the screen.

4. CCUBS will generate, and automatically send a denial letter to unsuccessful applicants.

5. Upon approval of the application, the ECSB Contract Specialist will set up the contract for all approved applicants following the steps below:

   a. On the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS, double click the box in the upper right hand corner labeled *Contract No.* This action will take the worker to the 'Contract' screen.

   b. On the 'Contractor' tab, enter the PS number of the applicant in the white box under Person ID* and hit the TAB key.

   c. On the 'Budget' tab, put the cursor in the 'Budget Section' box. Select the Infant Toddler Merit Pay [FFY] from the Budget Section drop down menu. **Using the mouse** move the cursor into the 'Budget Item' box and enter the following two budget items (Budget Items may be typed in word-specifically or may be selected from a list using the F9 key):
      - *Training* hit the TAB key and type $400.
      - *Advances* hit the TAB key and type in 0.
      - Click on the SAVE icon.

      At this point, CCUBS will SAVE the screen with a Contract Number.

   d. On the 'Contract Details' tab select the Contract Status drop down menu: highlight *2. Negotiation Complete*, and SAVE; highlight *3. Final In-Route Signatures*, and SAVE; highlight *4.*

Mailed, and SAVE; lastly highlight *5. Executed*, and SAVE.

6. Letters of approval must be printed in the ECSB central office so that an *Infant Toddler Merit Pay Summary* form can be attached and sent to the applicant. In CCUBS, navigate to 'Notifications' and enter the contract number in the appropriate column, hit Execute [F8]. Click on 'View Notification' and print the approval letter from this PDF document.

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Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services	Section: **Best Beginnings – Quality Initiatives**
CHILD CARE	Subject: **Provider Training**

Supersedes: **Child Care 7.6 (01/01/2000)**

References: **ARM 11.14.301 (10)**
ARM 11.14.401 (10)
ARM 11.14.609 (6) (d)
USCS (658G, 658E, (c) (3) (B))

Basic Child Care Orientation

➢ Family and group child care family home providers are required to attend an orientation training within the first 60 days of certification. Additionally, legally unregistered providers (LUP) are required to attend a basic training on health and safety issues within 60 days of application. The orientation sessions are provided on a regular basis by the CCR&R agencies and cover the following topics:

a) health
b) safety
c) record keeping
e) staffing requirements
f) universal precautions
g) insurance requirements
h) child development and guidance

Specialized Training Child Care

The Department of Public Health and Human Services contracts with organizations or individuals wishing to provide Specialized Training in Early Childhood Development for Early Care and Education Practitioners.

Specialized Training in Early Childhood Development, and related fields, is defined as education/training (including business training related to operation of a child care business) that:

1. leads to certification or degree
2. advances a participant along the career path; or
3. is innovative and not currently available in a community; or
4. focuses on a special population of early care and education practitioners, or special areas of interest to such practitioners.

For Example:

- Special child care issues and challenges in rural areas;
- Child care business practices;
- Addressing the unique needs of providers doing odd hour or part time care;
- Early childhood curriculum/curricula;
- Building strong parent/family and community partnerships;
- Inclusive practices; and/or
- Out of school time (after-school) programs or practices.

The Knowledge Base and Career Path

All training funded through the Best Beginnings project must be approved through the Montana Early Care and Education Training Approval System. In addition, training must be related to the Montana Early Care and Education Knowledge Base and Early Care and Education Career Path.

Training Opportunities

Training opportunities are available and offered statewide by a variety of training providers. These training providers include but are not limited to the following:

1. CCR&R agencies
2. MSU Early Childhood Project
3. U of M Child Care Plus+
4. Montana colleges and universities
6. Montana Child Care Association
7. Montana Association for the Education of Young Children

A complete listing of the approved training may be found on the Early Care and Education Career Development office at MSU may be found at the following web site.
www.montana.edu/~wwwecp

Mentoring Programs

The goals of the Mentoring programs are to:

1. Retain experienced, skilled early childhood practitioners in the community by providing financial incentives and recognition

of their contributions and to recognize the increase of skills in the early and education field,.

2. Provide professional development opportunities for mentors, particularly with regard to their peer communication, supervisory, leadership and adult education skills as they proceed along the Career Path.
3. Create increased opportunities for novice care givers to benefit from and early childhood educator and mentoring provider, gain new knowledge and improve their care-giving practices.

Core Elements of the Mentoring Program

Mentoring programs are designed to

- Be responsive to the developmental needs of participants, and include a mentor training based on adult development.
- Be supportive in nature, rather than linked to a formal evaluation process.
- Improve connections between mentors, protégés, parents, employers, trainers and colleges.
- Include specific training opportunities, approved through the Montana Early Care and Education Training Approval system, that bring protégés and mentors together to improve professional connections.
- Be self-examining in order to improve function, and contribute to the collective early care and education community.
- Contain educational material covering the areas of the Montana Early Care and Education Knowledge Base.
- Encourage participants to be involved in the professional community.
- Designate a Mentor coordinator who is responsible for facilitating the mentor network.

Criteria for Mentors

- Mentors must have attained a Level Three or above status on the Montana Early Care and Education Career Path.
- Mentors must possess good interpersonal skills for working with adults.
- Mentors must be able to dedicate the necessary monthly hours required by these projects.

Community Involvement

Mentor Programs for Early Childhood must be community based and guided. Programs must demonstrate coordination, collaboration and on-going program guidance provided by:

- Local provider groups or child care associations
- The local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency
- The local Child Care Licensing Agency,
- Parents, and others.

DPHHS Policy Manual: Supplemental Care
Introduction to Registration

Introduction

The 1981 Montana State Legislature passed House Bill 646 which empowered the Department of Public Health & Human Services to prescribe the conditions and publish minimum requirements upon which day care licenses and registration certificates are issued. In developing requirements, the department seeks the advice and assistance of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Fire Prevention and Investigation Bureau of the Law Enforcement Services Division, representatives of day care facilities, specialists in child care and representatives of parent groups who use the services of day care facilities. The requirements may pertain to:

- character, suitability, and qualifications of an applicant and other persons directly responsible for the care of children;
- the number of individuals or staff required for adequate supervision and care of children in day care facilities;
- child care programs and practices necessary to ensure the health, safety, safety in transportation, development, and well being of children;
- adequate and appropriate admission policies;
- adequacy of physical facilities and equipment;
- general financial ability and competence of an applicant to provide necessary care for children and maintain prescribed requirements; and
- the ages and numbers of children that may be cared for in a day care facility.

The overall purpose of the legislation was to assure that children requiring supplemental parental care be provided food, shelter, security and safety, guidance and direction, nurture and comfort, and learning experiences commensurate to their ages and capabilities so as to safeguard growth and development, thereby facilitating their proper physical and emotional maturation. The purpose of registration and licensing of day care facilities is to provide a reasonable degree of safety to all occupants in the facility.

Failure to Register

A person, group of persons, or corporation who establishes or maintains a day care facility or assists in conducting or maintaining a day care facility without first obtaining a license or registration certificate from the department is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction, is punishable by a fine not to exceed $500.

If the department finds that as a result of its investigation, the day care facility is operating without a license or registration, it may report the results of the investigation to the Attorney General and/or the City or County Attorney of the city/county where the facility is being operated. The department shall request the appropriate attorney to initiate an action in district court, justice court, municipal or city court of the appropriate jurisdiction. An injunction against the facility can be requested until a license/registration certificate is issued or denied and upheld.

Reference

Sections 52-2-702(1) and 731 MCA
See 52-2-741 MCA

Definitions:

Caregiver means a licensee, registrant, employee, aide or volunteer who is responsible for the direct care and supervision of children in a day care facility.

Day care or child care means care for children provided by an adult, other than a parent of the children or other person living with the children as a parent, on a regular basis for daily periods of less than 24 hours, whether that care is for daytime or nighttime hours. In addition to the previous definitional language found at 52-2-703, MCA, the term also means care to a child up to the age of 13 years except as indicated otherwise in these rules. The term does not include care by a relative.

Day care center means an out-of-home place in which day care is provided to 13 or more children on a regular basis.

Day care facility means a person, association or place, incorporated or unincorporated, that provides day care on a regular basis or a place licensed or registered to provide day care on an irregular basis for children suffering from illness. It includes a family day care home, a day care center, a group day care home, or a facility providing care in a child's home for the purpose of meeting registration requirements for the receipt of payments as provided in 52-2-713, MCA. The term does not include:

(a) a person who limits care to children who are related to the person by blood or marriage or under the person's legal guardianship, unless registration or licensure as a day care facility is required to receive payments as provided in 52-2-713, MCA; or

(b) any group facility established chiefly for educational purposes that limits its services to children who are 3 years of age or older. In addition to the previous definitional language found at 52-2-703, MCA, the term also does not include a person caring for the children of a single family; or a person, not receiving any type of state payment for day care, who is caring for children in the children's own home. In addition to the children being cared for in their own home, there may be no more than 2 children from another home being cared for by the same provider.

Department means the department of public health and human services provided for in 2-15-2201, MCA.

DT vaccine means a vaccine containing a combination of diphtheria and tetanus toxoids for pediatric use.

DTP vaccine means a vaccine containing diphtheria and tetanus toxoids and pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine combined, including a vaccine referred to as DTaP, diphtheria, tetanus toxoid and acellular pertussis vaccine combined.

Family day care home means a private residence in which day care is provided to 3 to 6 children on a regular basis. In addition to the previous definitional language found at 52-2-703, MCA, the term also means: a day care facility providing care to no more than 3 children under 2 years of age unless care is provided for infants only. For facilities providing care only for infants, family day care home means a place in which supplemental parental care is provided for up to 4 infants. No other children shall be in attendance.

Group day care home means a private residence or other structure in which day care is provided to 7 to 12 children on a regular basis. In addition to the previous definitional language found at 52-2-703, MCA, the term also means: a day care facility providing care to 7 to 12 children unless care is provided for infants only. For facilities providing care only for infants, group day care home means a place in which supplemental parental care is provided for up to 8 infants. No other children shall be in attendance.

(a) Facilities caring for infants shall maintain a staff/infant ratio of 1 caregiver for each 4 infants in attendance unless precluded by other facility staffing requirements.

Health care provider means a licensed physician, a physician assistant-certified, a nurse practitioner, a registered nurse, or a naturopathic physician practicing within the scope of the license.

Hib vaccine means a vaccine immunizing against infection by Haemophilus influenza type B disease.

Infant means a child under the age of 24 months of age.

License means a written document issued by the department that the license holder has complied with the applicable standards and rules for day care centers.

Local health authority means a local health officer, local department of health, or local board of health.

MMR vaccine means a live virus vaccine containing a combination of measles, mumps and rubella vaccine.

Night care means care provided for a child between the hours of 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. during which the parent(s) desires a child to sleep.

Overlap care means care provided at a day care facility for children age 3 and older for the times before and after school and approved by the department for a designated period of time not to exceed 3 hours when the number of children in care may exceed the number of children registered for care on the registration certificate.

Physician means a person licensed to practice medicine under Title 37, chapter 3, MCA.

Preschooler means a child between 36 months of age and the age the child will be when he or she initially enters a public or private school system.

Provider means the applicant for license or registration, the licensee or registrant.

Provisional certificate means a registration or license status that is given to a day care provider, if the provider does not meet all the registration or license requirements but is attempting to comply. This status can be granted for a period of up to 3 months. A second 3 month certificate may be issued at the discretion of the day care licensing program manager.

Public sewage system means a system of collection, transportation, treatment or disposal of sewage that is designed to serve or serves 15 or more families or 25 or more persons for a period of at least 60 days out of the calendar year.

Public water supply system means a system for the provision of water for human consumption from any community well, water hauler for cisterns, water bottling plant, water dispenser, or other water supply that is designed to serve or serves 15 or more families or 25 or more persons daily or has at least 15 service connections at least 60 days out of the calendar year.

Registrant means the holder of a registration certificate issued by the department in accordance with the provisions of Title 52, chapter 2, part 7, MCA.

Registration means the process whereby the department maintains a record of all family day care homes and group day care homes, prescribes standards, promulgates rules, and requires the operator of a family day care home or a group day care home to certify compliance with the prescribed standards and promulgated rules.

Registration certificate means a written instrument issued by the department to publicly document that the certificate holder has, in writing certified to the department compliance with this rule and the applicable standards for family day care home and group day care homes.

Regular certificate means a license status that is given upon determination that the day care provider is meeting all requirements set forth for family day care homes, or group day care homes, or day care centers.

Regular basis means providing day care to children of separate families for any daily periods of less than 24 hours and within 3 or more consecutive weeks. In addition to the previous definitional language found at 52-2-703, MCA, the term also means the child must be in attendance 4 or more days a week for 6 hours a day or more.

Related by blood or marriage means the status of a child who is the son, daughter, brother, sister, first cousin, nephew, niece, or grandchild of a person providing child care.

(a)The term includes the status of a child described above in a step or adoptive relationship.

Restricted certificate means a license/registration status given to a registrant/licensee when it has been determined that the provider is unable to meet certain specific requirement criteria but is participating in an agreed upon plan of correction.

School-age child means a person who is at least 5 years of age and who is younger than 13 years of age or a person with special needs, as defined by the department, who is under 18 years of age or is 18 years of age and a full time student expected to complete an educational program by 19 years of age.

Supplemental parental care means the provision of day care by an adult other than a parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis on a regular basis for daily periods of less than 24 hours.

Toddler means a child who is 24 months of age to 36 months of age.

Vaccine means one of the following:

(a) if administered in the United States, an immunizing agent approved by the bureau of biologics, food and drug administration, United States public health services; or

(b) if administered outside the United States, an immunizing agent administered by a person licensed to practice medicine in the country where it is administered or by an agent of the principal public health agency of that country and properly documented as required by ARM 16.28.704.

References: Section 52-2-703, MCA
Section 52-2-713, MCA
Section37.95.102, ARM

DPHHS-QAD Policy Manual: Supplemental Care
Day Care Registration Procedure

Requirements

The registration requirements for family day care homes, group day care homes, and facilities providing care for infants are available in the booklets entitled Requirements for Registration of Family Day Care Homes, Requirements for Registration of Group Day Care Homes, and Supplemental Regulations for Infant Day Care. The booklets are available from any DPHHS-QAD child care licensing office, Resource and Referral office, or the Central Office Licensing Technician.

Registration Procedure for New Applicant

Any agency, group or individual 18 years of age or older may request to be registered as a family or group day care home provider. Applications for registration may be obtained from any local DPHHS-QAD office, local Resource and Referral office or Indian tribal government office.

Registration Application Packet

A Registration Application Packet shall be mailed to the applicant within five working days of the inquiry.

The Registration Application Packet could include:

- A cover letter with provider instructions;
- Application for Registration Certificate, Family or Group Day Care Home -QAD-088;
- Family Day Care Home Checklist, QAD 99, Group Day Care Home Checklist, QAD 99b, or Infant Day Care Home Checklist, QAD 99a, one copy as appropriate; and
- Family or Group Day Care Home Regulation booklets, one copy, and the Infant Supplemental Guide, as appropriate.
- Personal Statement of Health - QAD 33b,
- Release of Information-QAD-018a (i.e. criminal records check and CPS records check)

- a written fire and evacuation plan;
- Sq.footage report;
- Daily Activity/Written Plan of Activity;
- Sample Menu;
- Other information concerning requirments to be met (i.e., CPR/1st aide)

The applicant returns the completed application and appropriate checklists to a local Day Care Licensing office. The applicant must verify that he/she has fire and liability insurance. The insurance coverage will be sufficient to cover the number of children registered, minus the provider's children. Children cared for during the overlap period must also be covered. **This requirement cannot be waived.**

DPHHS Day Care Licensing Office Review

The licensing worker checks the application, checklist(s) and QAD-33b provider staff health form for completeness. If the forms are satisfactorily completed and indicates the applicant's appropriateness to provide care, the licensing worker recommends approval to the child care program manager/ supervisor and the registration certificate is prepared. The authority to issue a registration certificate lies with the child care program manager/supervisor.

Incomplete Application

If the application is incomplete, the child care licensor or designee contacts the applicant by phone to discuss the application; attaches a short memo for written verification and returns the application or applicable portion of the application to the applicant for completion.

Incomplete or Questionable Health Appraisal

More information may be required if the applicant has failed to check, or has checked "yes" on questions 1-7 of the QAD-033b. The Child Care Licensor or designee returns the appropriate section of the application packet and a QAD 33A - Licensed Care Provider Medical Report, to the applicant along with a written request for the additional information. This information is to be obtained from the applicant's physician or other professional who has treated the applicant's

condition.

Applicants with Reported or Substantiated Child Abuse, Neglect or Physical Violence

The worker must conduct an extensive search into the nature of the reports and their resolution if the applicant has checked "yes", on item 4 on the QAD-088 -Application for Registration Certificate, or if the CPS check reveals Department involvement with the applicant or the family. If the applicant has a substantiated report of child abuse, child neglect, or physical violence, the application may be denied. If the applicant has been reported for alleged abuse or neglect, but the acts have not been substantiated because an investigation is in progress, the worker shall not issue a license or certificate pending the outcome of the investigation. If the investigation reveals no substantiated reports of abuse, neglect, or violence and if the worker has not found other grounds for denial, the applicant may then be issued a regular certificate by the child care program manager/supervisor.

References:

The three references given by the applicant must be contacted by the Child Care Licensor, contact may be by phone, in person, or by mail. A registration certificate will not be issued until all references have responded and the Child Care Licensor is satisfied that the references indicate that the applicant can provide child day care without endangering the children. An effort will be made to contact one additional reference if one of the three references is not conclusive or is suspect. The reference check is only required for initial licenses and is not required for renewals.

Completed Application

A completed application includes:

- completed application for family or group day care home;
- completed checklist for family, or group day care home and infants, if appropriate;
- QAD-33a's - Personal statements of health for the provider, all caregivers and any adults living in the household;
- verification of fire/ public liability insurance;

- Immunization information for the provider, caregivers and any adults living in the household (refer to rule for specific immunizations);
- TB skin test results--this is required for all persons providing direct care to children, including the provider and any employees. The skin test must have been done within the year prior to initial employment;
- three satisfactory reference letters (on initial application only)
- Satisfactory CPS check results;
- Satisfactory criminal records check results--including a department of motor vehicle clearance;
- Written Plan of Activities;
- Sq.Footage Report;
- Sample Menu;
- Proof of CPR/1st Aid certification or proof of scheduled course for CPR/1st aid

Registration Certificate Packet

Within thirty days of the date a **completed** application is received and approved by the Child Care Licensor, a Registration Certification Packet shall be mailed to the provider. The registration packet may include:

- a cover letter
- the Registration Certificate;
- HES-101 State of Montana Certificate of Immunization forms; one for each child receiving day care as well as one for all persons residing in the facility.

- DFS-113 Emergency Contact Information and Parental Consent Form -one for each child's record;
- DPHHS-DCH-200 Pediatric Health Statement-one for each infant in attendance at the facility
- miscellaneous technical assistance material.

Denial of Registration For Incompleteness

If any portion of the DFS-88 Application for Registration Certificate is incomplete, the applicant will be noticed and the application returned. Thirty days will be allowed for the application to be refiled. If the worker has not received the application with the requested additional information within 30 days, the registration will be denied. A applicant denied in this fashion may reinitiate the application process at the point of denial with a written request and the completion and submittal of all required department forms.

Letter Of Denial

Whenever an application for registration is denied, the applicant must be notified in writing of the reasons for denial. The letter of denial also notifies the applicant of the right to a fair hearing which must be requested within 10 days of receipt of the notice of denial, sent by certified mail, and the procedure for requesting the hearing (see QAD 815-10).

Provisional Registration Certificate

If a day care facility does not meet all the requirements but is attempting to comply, a provisional registration certificate may be issued for a period of up to three months. A second three-month provisional certificate may be issued in special circumstances at the discretion of the day care program officer. The total provisional period(s) may not exceed 6 months. *If a certificate is issued under the provisional guidelines, this must be indicated on the license.*

Any time a license is reduced to a provisional status, the provider must be given a right to appeal this decision. See manual section 815-10 for procedures in notifying providers of this process.

Failure to obtain fire and liability insurance cannot be used as a reason to issue a provisional registration certificate. **The requirement that**

the provider obtain fire and public liability insurance prior to registration cannot be waived.

Determination of Legal Action

If an applicant continues to provide care following the suspension, revocation or denial of a license, the department may initiate legal action to assure that the applicant does not provide care without a valid registration certificate or license. See 815-1 for court jurisdiction and program procedure.

Dual Licensure

Applicants who request dual licensure/registration under the day care programs and the youth foster care programs must submit a written plan that clearly addresses the assurance of safety, supervision, personal care, attention, control and protection of children while both populations of children are in their care.

Child Care Licensors, in reviewing a request for dual licensure/registration, shall coordinate with the foster care licensing specialist and determine concurrance with the applicants written plan as indicated above.

Overlap Care
ARM 11.14.324(2) and 11.14.418

The intent of overlap care is to provide care for an increased number of children before and after school. If the provider would like to utilize overlap for their facility, the request must be made in writing from the provider. Overlap care must meet the following conditions:

1. Overlap care shall not exceed three hours in total each day.

2. Overlap care is not permitted for children under the age of three years.

3. Family day care homes may care for two (2) additional children during the approved overlap time. Group day care homes may provide overlap care to 8 children with one caregiver during the approved overlap period. If

during this overlap period, the number of children increases to 9 or more, two caregivers must be present.

4. Child day care homes providing two shifts of care within a day may be granted three hours of overlap care for each 12 hours of continuous care, upon the written approval of the respective child care licensor or supervisor.

5. Overlap care shall not occur until the provider has received written approval of the overlap plan from the department.

NOTE: Due to emergency evacuation problems, group day care facilities that use any floor above the 1st floor, for any day care purposes, will not be approved for overlap unless fire safety codes are met.

For this purpose, the first floor is defined in Article 4 of the 1991 uniform building code page 31: In the case of a split level single family home, the lowest floor level will be considered to be basement level and the floor above to be the 1st floor, if that floor has at least 2 remote exit doors leading directly to the exterior.

Procedure The provider submits to the local child care licensor's office, a plan for the overlap care to be provided during specific time periods for a specified number of additional children.

DPHHS Day Care Licensing Office The Child Care Licensor reviews the plan for approval or recommendation to the supervisor. When the overlap plan is approved, a new Family or Group Child Day Care Home Registration Certificate is completed. Overlap hours and the number of additional children approved are listed on the certificate. The certificate is sent to the provider indicating the department's approval.

Overlap care ceases upon the annual certificate renewal date. If overlap care is to continue, the provider submits a continuation plan at registration renewal. The renewal registration certificate is marked to indicate the overlap hours and number of children approved by the

department.

DocGen Certificate: certificate of registration or licensure

Once the day care registration is approved in the CAPS system, a certificate will be issued. This Certificate will include such information as, the name of the registrant, the registration period, the number and ages of children to be cared for (including the number of children belonging to the provider), the certificate status (regular or provisional) and other pertinent license information, i.e., overlap numbers, restrictions, etc.

The certificate is generated as a result of information entered into the CAPS system. Much of what goes onto the certificate is obtained from the FALD and FACD screens. It is necessary that the information on the certificate be consistent as to: (1) the numbers of children being provided care, (2) whether the certificate is a provisional or a regular certificate, (3) the number of infants allowed and (4) whether the facility has a name different from the licensee (AKA Name).

To add these components to the certificate, child care licensors will need to utilize the "Licensed For" field on FALD.

Listing number of children

In order to indicate the number of children for whom care can be provided, workers will need to indicate it as follows:

> "Licensed for (# of children, ages xx to xx) ***including*** (xxnumber) of the providers own."

Other components on certificate

Other important registration components must be added to the certificate. By utilizing FALD and the "licensed for" field, workers can indicate whether the certificate is Provisional, the number of infants allowed, and whether the facility goes by a secondary name. If the number of infants is not otherwise noted, the maximum allowed by registration category (i.e., FDCH=3 infants, GDCH=6) will be listed on the certificate.

An example would look like this:

"Licensed for: 6 children, 0-12, including two of the providers own, 2 infants allowed. Provisional. ABC Day Care."

This information may be abbreviated as necessary.

References

Section 52-2-721 through 52-2-722, MCA
ARM Sections 37.95.106 through 37.95.108.

DPHHS Policy Manual: Supplemental Care
Day Care Orientation and Training

Purpose

This policy's intent is to clarify the child care licensing program worker's role, the R&R agency role in the orientation process and outline the information to be presented. New provider orientation information will be consistent statewide. Additionally, this section will specify the new information concerning mandatory training for all day care providers.

R&R Agency Role--orientation

The District Resource and Referral Agencies, in consultation and assistance with the local Child Care Licensor, will coordinate the orientation for providers. Once orientation has occurred, the R&R will submit the names of the attendees to local licensing staff, so that the information can be recorded.

In the event of an unusual circumstance where a provider is unable to attend the orientation, the R&R agency, the DPHHS licensing representative and the provider will agree upon and document a plan for completion of this requirement.

Licensing's Role--orientation

Family and group day care home providers must attend a basic day care orientation within 60 days of becoming registered. Each child care licensing office--in coordination with the local R&R agency-- shall ensure that orientation is available for **all** registered providers in the district. The local licensing worker will communicate to the R&R, the names of providers who are "provisionally" registered or have made application and are needing to attend the orientation session.

Orientation Content

The content of the orientation will include the following topics:

Health--areas to be covered include: immunizations, communicable disease, sick child care policy, hand washing procedures, first aid basic content/checklist, universal precautions, medical release, medication administering procedure, health and sanitation regulations, and other health related issues

Safety --incident reporting, child proofing the home/outdoor environment, transportation safety, personal safety (contact with others),

fire safety, accident prevention, equipment checks/safety, emergency procedures, signs and symptoms of abuse/neglect, mandatory reporting, insurance requirements, other safety issues.

Child Development/Well-Being -- Environment and routines, Special needs/ADA, ages and stages and curriculum.

Discipline/Guidance -- "time out" issues, redirection, assessing curriculum and environment to minimize behavior problems, developmental appropriate guidance.

Nutrition/Food Safety --Food preparation and safety dietary guidelines

Business Aspects of a Child Care Business --Record keeping, contracts/policies, daily attendance, children's files, tax information, professionalism, State Child Care Assistance, staffing requirements.

Responsibilities

R&R Agency

The R&R agency is responsible for setting up the orientation training, sending out notices of the training and as applicable, coordinating speakers. Several of the subject content areas will be presented by R&R agency staff.

Licensing Worker

The licensing worker has a major role in this process. The licensing worker will cover the following areas as **the areas relate to the rules and regulations governing the day care licensing program. The R&R agency and other community speakers may cover the same topics but in more specific or a community related manner.**

Topic Areas:

1. Why do we regulate?
   - A. MT. Law regarding regulation--definition and Purpose statements
   - B. Penalty for Illegal Operation

C. Benefits of Regulation--state assistance, CACFP, Tax benefits, etc.

2. A. Licensing Worker Review of Application
   1. Time frame for license/registration issuance
   2. Helena Process for Issuance of certificate
   3. What does the Certificate indicate?
      --That the provider meets the *minimum standards*, does not indicate in all cases that there has been an on-site inspection prior to issuance.

   B. Orientation

3. Types of Day Care Facilities
   A. Three main Types
      Family Day Care Homes
      Group Day Care Homes
      Day Care Centers
   B. Infant Only Facilities
   C. FDC and GDC
   1. Most requirements are the same for FDC and GDC
   2. Paperwork Requirements for Family and Group Day Care Homes
      a. Immunization Forms (unless the public health nurse if covering immunization information)
      b. Day care contracts -(unless the R&R is already be covering)
      c. Emergency contact information
      d. Written feeding schedules for under age 2
      e. Written first aid policies
      f. Notation of all Injuries
      g. Record of Food served
      h. Daily Attendance Record
      I. Master list of Parents and children
      j. Pediatric Statement of Health--***unless public health nurse is covering***
      k. Provider Policies--as they relate to regulations

3. Overlap
   a. Definition
   b. Intent
   c. Numbers for FDC, GDC
   d. Approval process

4. Regulation Highlights

   A. Provider Qualification and Responsibilities
      1. Age
      2. Mandatory Reporter
      3. Report Accidents
      4. CPR/First Aid Training
      5. Orientation
      6. Supervision
         a. What does Supervision mean?
         b. Night care issues
      7. Background check--what do they mean?

5. Building Requirements
   A. 35 sq. Feet per child (indoors)
      --usable space: What is considered?
   B. 75 sq. ft. per child outdoors
   C. Building in good repair--cleanable
   D. Protective covers on outlets
   E. Napping rooms/ventilation
   F. Basements
   G. Third Stories

6. Fire Safety Requirements--***Unless the fire marshall is already covering***
   A. Escape Plan
   B. 2A10BC fire extinguisher
   C. Working Smoke Detector
      1. Where do they have to be located?
   D. Wood Burning Stoves
   E. No portable heating devices
   F. Two means of egress

G. Window and door openings
H. Documentation of 8 fire drills

7. Health and Safety Requirements
   A. No smoking
      1. Define
      2. Assuring a smoke free environment
   B. Toxic Materials Inaccessible
   C. Medications
   D. Gun/Ammunition Locked and Separated
   E. Poison Control Number, 1-800-525-5042
   F. Protective covers for outlets
   G. Fenced Play area

8. Discipline
   A. No spanking, slapping
   B. No shaming, humiliation
   C. No frightening, yelling
   D. Alternative Methods
      1. Talking, explanation
      2. Time out, remove, re-direct
      3. Positives, praise, problem solving
      4. Developmentally appropriate activities will help ensure more positive behaviors
9. Frequent Problems
   A. Findings for current 20% sampling--Most Frequent Area's of Non-compliance
   B. Supervision
   C. Parent-provider communication
   D. Discipline

10. Montana Code Annotated
    A. Mandatory Reporting
       1. Reporting on Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect MCA 41-3-201
       2. Signs and Symptoms of abuse or neglect
       3. Report Contents
          How to report, including what information is

necessary to ascertain a good report

4. Civil Liability--there is none if the report is made without malicious intent.

B. Failure to Report

1. MCA 41-3-207

Mandatory Training

The provider and all caregivers must verify that they have received a minimum of at least 8 hours of continuing education on an annual basis. This training must be considered "approved" training. Approved training is that which has met the criteria of the Montana Career Development System guidelines. The criteria for approved training includes:

- Training must be at least 2 hours in length;
- Content of the Training must be based upon the Montana Early Care and Education Knowledge Base (see below)
- Training must be geared so that there is interaction between the provider and the instructor: face to face sessions, written correspondence, email instruction, etc;
- If training occurs through a college level course, then the institutuion of higher learning must be accredited and recognized by the US Department of Education.

Other guidelines are currently being developed for distance learning options.

Knowledge Base Content Areas

The 8 hours of training must be completed in the following topic areas as defined by the Montana Early Care and Education Knowledge Base:

- personal attributes/characteristic;
- health, saftey and nutrition;
- child growth and development;
- environmental design
- child guidance;
- family and community partnerships;
- program management;
- curriculum;
- observation and assessment;
- professionalism; or

- cultural and developmental diversity

For newly registered providers, the mandatory orientation session will count toward the 8 hours of mandatory licensing training, *in the first year only.* Additionally, the hours associated with CPR/1st aid *do not count* toward the 8 hours of mandatory licensing training.

Furthermore, those providers who participate in the CACFP program, can apply *3 of that programs 5 required training hours* toward licensing's 8 hour requirement.

CPR/1st Aid

The provider must hold a current certification card in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) including infant choking response. If the caregiver is caring for children under the age of 8, it is also required that the provider have certification in infant-child CPR and standard first aid.

Providers, who upon initial registration, have not been able to complete a certification course due to the scheduling of the community classes, will be granted a provisional registration/approval (for center caregivers) until the course is completed and documentation submitted to the department.

References:

52-2-723 and 731, MCA
37.95.620, ARM
37.95.701, ARM

Introduction

Montana Code Annotated requires "the department must visit and inspect at least 20% of all registered family day care homes and group day care homes in each of the governor's planning regions annually". (MCA 52-2-733).

The following policy and procedures should ensure equal treatment of registrants on a statewide basis while continuing the policy of flexibility at the district level to allow for local variations as needed.

Sample

On an annual basis, the Program Supervisor will determine the number of facilities to be inspected by utilizing the most current CAPS list registered family and group day care home providers. The Child Care Licensing worker will determine which providers are selected for survey. Unless special circumstance exists, the licensing worker will not repeat a 20% visit to a provider who has been previously visited. The licensing worker, will include in their selection of providers to be inspected **all newly registered providers.**

Each licensor is responsible for establishing their own survey schedule ans shall submit to the central office a progress report of the visits. The reports shall be submitted via e-mail to the program supervisor on a quarterly basis.

Visits to providers

Montana Code Annotated states "it shall be the duty of every applicant for a license or for registration and every licensee or registrant to give the right of entrance to and inspection of premises to representatives of the department at reasonable times, to keep and maintain such records as the department may prescribe, to permit inspection of these records, and to report to the department such facts as may be required on forms furnished by the department". (52-2-732 MCA).

It is the QAD-Licensure Bureau policy that where ever practical, licensing workers visits to the 20% sample providers shall be unannounced. **All** annual license visits to day care centers shall be unannounced as required by 52-2-733, MCA.

Compliance

When the worker determines that the provider is out of compliance

Letters

with one or more of the minimum requirements for registration, a letter of deficiency will be issued. In some cases, a minor infraction of the rules may occur. Licensing workers may document a verbal plan of correction on the survey tool and decline to include the infraction in a letter deficiency. In these cases, other means of documentation may include the comment area of the appropriate survey tool, provider checklist or in CAPS on the PRCL screen.

The DPHHS Child Care Licensing Worker may disagree with the provider's perception of whether one or more of the requirements have been met. In these instances the licensing workers interpretation of the rules and regulations shall prevail after consultation with the program supervisor, who in turn, may consult with the bureau chief and/or legal department. If violations are noted, a letter of deficiency shall be issued following the site visit and inspection. A general principal for the licensing worker is that nothing is official until it is documented. The letter of deficiency is sent with a cover letter and must contain the following elements:

- **Rule Violation**: the deficiency notice must contain the specific violation of licensing requirements. The full text of the administrative rule of Montana section will be listed on the department's side of the form;

- **Justification:** The deficiency notice must contain justification for the determinations of non-conformity, i.e., "As evidenced by: worker observation, through provider/parent/child interview, other agency personnel observation, etc;

- Notice: The cover letter must include a notice that failure to correct the deficiency can negatively impact the registration/license certificate; and

- **Time Limits:** The cover letter must contain the time limits for compliance. Generally, the provider has 10 working days from the receipt of the letter of deficiency to submit an acceptable plan of correction. However, at worker discretion, the time limit may be varied.

Some areas of non compliance may take additional time to bring into compliance. Completion dates for Plans of Correction can be accepted with 60 to 90 days as approved by the licensing worker.

Registration Revocation/and or Suspension

If any one violation places a child in imminent risk, harm or danger, revocation or suspension may be immediate. The licensing worker will recommend immediate suspension or revocation to the program supervisor who in consultation with the bureau chief and the department attorney will initiate the process to determine if there exists enough direct evidence for the action. If so, the program supervisor will coordinate with the worker to implement the action. Such actions may involve writing affidavits and securing approval from the Department's Hearing's Officer.

It is the QAD policy that if the provider is out of compliance with requirements that do not place children in immediate danger, the letter of deficiency may be considered a notice of non-compliance, and can result in a reduction of the license, a restriction against the license or result in a process called the Directed Plan of Correction. Notice of these license actions shall be included in the cover letter.Copies of all provider notices/or negative licensing actions should be sent to the program supervisor via E-mail.

No denial, suspension, reduction or revocation letter shall be sent with out first seeking consultation with the program supervisor. The program supervisor may also consult with the bureau chief and/or department attorney in determining whether the action is appropriate.

Any denial, suspension, reduction or revocation letter sent shall include instructions for and notification of the right to request a hearing "within ten (10) days of the notice of department action". Notice is deemed given upon receipt of a certified letter from the agency. Copies of a denial, suspension, reduction or revocation will be sent to the program supervisor, and the DPHHS hearings officer.

References

Section 52-2-733-MCA and Section 52-2-732,MCA

DPHHS Policy Manual: Supplemental Care Checklist for Family Day Care Home (QAD-99), Infant Care (QAD-99A) and Group Day Care Home (QAD-99B)

Purpose

The Family, Group and Infant Day Care Checklists, were developed to:

- ensure that all requirements are reviewed with each provider and that the provider understands the rules;
- maintain consistency in applying the requirements to providers statewide;
- provide the department with documentation for action; and
- help the department through uniform record keeping to ascertain which requirements need to be amended, deleted or further strengthened.

The checklists are used on at least these occasions:

- a checklist is mailed to each applicant to be completed and returned with the QAD 88 Application for Registration;
- when the provider relocates to a new site; and
- upon renewal of registration certificates.

Description

Each checklist follows the same format and is in duplicate so one copy can be given to the provider. The checklist is not a substitue for the survey tool which must be completed during the on-site inspection/visit.

The number in the far left-hand margin on each checklist corresponds to the number of the rule as it appears in the day care regulation booklets.

The second column, labeled "Rule #" contains the number as it appears

in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM). Warning letters and compliance letters or other written notice of adverse action should contain a reference to both the booklet number and the rule number.

The third column, "Area of Evaluation and/or Inspection", contains an abbreviated statement of the requirement as it appears in both the day care regulation booklet and the Administrative Rules of Montana. The department representatives need to be familiar with the complete rule while keeping in mind that the "checklist" is a tool to be used to record that the rule has been reviewed with the provider.

The fourth through sixth columns are to be used by the **provider** to note whether s/he is in compliance with the rule.

Comments

At the end of each checklist is a Section labeled "comments". The department representatives should utilize this if particular details need to be noted.

Signature(s) and Date

The checklists contain lines both for the signature of the provider completing the checklist. There is also space for the provider to sign and verify whether s/he concurs or does not concur with the findings.

References

Section 52-2-733, MCA
Sections 37.95.102 through 1021, ARM

DPHHS Policy Manual: Supplemental Care
Day Care Center Licensing Procedure

Licensing or Registration Type

For specific definitions of day care facilities, refer to section 815-2.

Inquiry

Upon receipt of an inquiry regarding center licensing, the Child Care Licensor may suggest that the state or local fire officials, the local health official(s) and the City/County Planning Department be contacted to provide consultation regarding adequacy of the building.

Licensing Procedure for New Applicant

Any individual, agency, or group may apply for a license to operate a day care center. An applicant who has had a previous day care application denied or who has had a day care license revoked may not reapply for licensure within one year of the denial or revocation. Applications may be obtained from any DPHHS office Child Care Resource & Referral Agency or Indian tribal government office.

Application packet

Application packet includes:

- DFS-25 Application For License For Child Day Care Center
- QAD-033b Statements of Health, (sufficient number for each employee, aids and volunteers)
- QAD-018a, Release of Information, (sufficient number for each employee, aides, and volunteers), for purposes of conducting criminal, DMV and CPS background checks;
- Insurance Verification form;
- QAD-99c Day Care Center Checklist;
- QAD-99a, Infant Care Check list (if appropriate);
- Sq. Footage/floor plan calculation form;
- Written Activity Schedule;
- Sample Menu form;

- cover letter

Site Visit

Within 30 days of receipt of a completed application (see below for details), a Child Care Licensor must visit a prospective day care center to inspect and observe the program and facility.

Granting a License: consideration

Before a License can be considered and thus granted, the following must be submitted to the department:

- An approved inspection report from the DOJ Division of Fire Prevention and Fire Investigation program or a local fire official indicating that fire safety rules have been met. **This requirement may not be waived;**
- An approved inspection report from the Public Health Authority (i.e., local sanitarian) certifying the satisfactory completion of training or a certificate of approval following inspection of the facility by local public health authorities. **This requirement may not be waived;**
- Proof of Fire and Public Liability Insurance. It must be currently in force for the protection of the operator, staff and the facility. Insurance shall cover the number of children for which the facility is licensed. **This requirement may not be waived;**
- Schedule of Daily Activities;
- Completed Sample Menu;
- QAD-33b, Statements of Health for the Director of the Center;
- Proof of Director Immunizations;
- Signed QAD-18a, Release of Information forms for the director; and
- Written Fire and Emergency Evacuation Plan

Staff Files: established by center director

The Director is responsible for establishing staff files which MUST contain the following information for each staff person:

- 3 letters of reference;
- completed health statements;
- Release of Information Forms for the purposes of conducting background clearances;
- Completed Background checks: Criminal, CPS and DMV (for staff who transport);
- Completed and up to date immunization verification;
- Education and work experience.

This information must be available to licensing staff upon the site visit. A license cannot be granted until this information is verified.

Local Health Authority: Other Day Care Center Responsibilities

The Department's Food and Consumer Safety Section is responsible for adopting rules for the protection of children in day care centers from the health hazards of inadequate food preparation, poor nutrition and communicable diseases. Copies of these rules are available from the State Health Department, Tribal Government offices, or the local office of the Department. (ARM Title 16, Chapter 24, subchapter 4).

Recommendation for Licensure

When the department receives approval from the fire Marshall and the local health authority as well as written verification of public liability and fire insurance, submission of all the required items listed above and the site visit has occurred *(verification of staff files is complete)*, a decision to approve or deny a license should be made within 10 working days.

If the applicant meets the requirements for licensure, the Child Care Licensor will make a recommendation to the Child Care Licensing Program Supervisor, who then approves or denies the license.

Periodic Visits Investigations and Consultation:

The department Child Care Licensor make periodic visits to all licensed day care centers to ensure that minimum requirements are maintained. Every licensed center should be visited at least twice a year, with one visit being unannounced.

Upon request the department shall give consultation to any licensee who desires to improve the services of his or her program.

References Section 52-2-704(2)(d-g) through 52-2-741, MCA
37.95.106, ARM

DPHHS Policy Manual: Supplemental Care
Renewal Procedures for Day Care Facilities

Family Homes
Group Homes

Prior to registration expiration (90-120 days), the Department should send the provider a license expiration notice and a renewal packet. The packet includes:

- cover letter;
- QAD-25B - Renewal Application for Day Care;
- QAD 33b - Personal Statement of Health for each person providing care and for all adults who live in the residence;
- QAD-99 - Family Day Care Checklist, QAD-99b Group Day Care Checklist, QAD-99a Infant Checklist or, one copy as appropriate.
- QAD-18, Release of Information forms, for each person providing care and for all adults who may live in the residence
- Other materials as necessary;

When the renewal application is completed and returned, the licensing program administrative support person will enter and update into CAPS the following information:

- The criminal and protective services background check and the results;
- Health statements for each caregiver and residents;
- verify and update insurance (both liability and fire insurance);
- verify the providers address and phone number;
- verify and update overlap hours and days of care; and
- verify the "Publish" category;

The Central Office Administrative Support staff will also verify that the provider has submitted proof of CPR/1st Aid and 8 hours of approved training, her/himself and all persons providing direct care to the children.

The renewal application will then be forwarded to the respective child

care licensor for a review of:

- any checklists for concerns,
- verification of CPR and First Aid,
- verification of 8 hours of approved training (in appropriate Knowledge Base Content Areas),
- results of criminal and protective services background check
- caregiver and resident immunizations ; and
- other renewal paperwork material as deemed necessary.

Once the child care licensor has reviewed the renewal material for accuracy, the licensor will either initially approve or deny the renewal application. If the licensor initially approves the renewal, he/she will enter into CAPS the effective date of the registration, and indicate approval by placing a "Y" in the approval field.

A recommendation for final approval is generated through an alert to the Program Supervisor. If the Program Supervisor concurs, he/she will indicate such by placing a "Y" in the respective field on CAPS.

Should the renewal application be denied, the child care licensor will staff the reasons for denial with the Program Supervisor. If it is agreed that the renewal application is to be denied, the child care licensing worker will indicate a TRM code in CAPS applicable to the reasons for denial. The worker will notice the provider in writing of the reasons.

Recommendation and notification of approval or denial will be accomplished within 30 working days of a completed renewal packet. Renewal recommendations shall not be held up waiting for criminal and protective services background checks to be completed. A provisional registration can be recommended. The department can take retroactive negative registration action if the background checks return with a record, which would disqualify the person as a caregiver.

Upon the completion of the renewal process the following will be sent:

- (optional) cover letter; and

- registration certificate.

Upon the request of the provider, the following can also be sent:

- QAD-113 - Emergency Contact Forms;
- HES-101, State of Montana Certificate of Immunization;
- DPHHS/QAD 200- Pediatric Statement of Health and
- other miscellaneous technical assistance material.

Provisional Registration

If a provisional registration is granted as a result of any action, including actions resulting from incomplete background checks, the provider will be sent a letter with the provisional registration certificate explaining the reasons for the provisional status, what must be done to lift the provisional status and the time frame for completion. See Section 815-10 for Negative Licensing action and Due Process Rights.

Day Care Centers

Prior to the expiration of the day care license (90-120 days), the department shall send the provider a license expiration notice and a renewal packet. The packet includes:

- cover letter; (see sample)
- QAD 33b - Personal Statement of Health for the director, primary caregivers and aides;
- QAD-18, Release of Information form, for the director, caregivers, or other persons having direct contact with the children; and
- DFS 25 - Application for Renewal of Day Care Center License.

Upon receipt of the completed application, including fire marshal certification, local health authority certification, written verification of liability and fire insurance, and verification that each staff person has had

a criminal and protective services background check conducted, the child care licensor will conduct an on-site inspection. If the on-site inspection is satisfactory, the **child care licensor** will review the packet materials--including:

- verification of CPR and First Aid for primary caregivers;
- verification of 8 hours of approved training (in applicable Knowledge Base Content Areas);
- Criminal and protective services background check verification; and
- review other licensing paperwork as deemed necessary.

If this review and the onsite inspection satisfactorily meet the criteria necessary for licensure, the licensor will update the licensing record to include:

- Results of the criminal and protective services background check (as provided by the center director) for each caregiver and other people having direct contact with the children;
- update that health statements for each staff person;
- verify and update insurance (both liability and fire);
- update health inspection and fire inspection dates;
- verify that the providers address (physical and mailing) and phone number are correct;
- update days of care; and
- verify the "Publish" category;

Once the child care licensor has reviewed the renewal material for accuracy, the licensor will either initially approve or deny the renewal application. If the licensor initially approves the renewal, he/she will enter into CAPS the effective date of the license certificate, and indicate approval by placing a "Y" in the approval field.

A recommendation for final approval is generated through an alert to the Program Supervisor. If the Program Supervisor concurs, he/she will indicate such by placing a "Y" in the respective field on CAPS.

Should the renewal application be denied, the child care licensor will staff the reasons for denial with the Program Supervisor. If it is agreed that the renewal application is to be denied, the child care licensing worker will indicate a TRM code in CAPS applicable to the reasons for denial. The worker will provide written notice to the provider of the reasons for denial.

Recommendation and notification of approval or denial will be accomplished within 30 working days of a completed renewal application. Renewal recommendations shall not be held up waiting for criminal and protective services background checks to be completed. A provisional registration can be recommended. The department can take retroactive (negative) registration action if the background checks return with a record, which would disqualify the person as a caregiver.

Upon approval of the day care center license, the following will be sent to the provider:

- cover letter (optional); and
- license.

Upon request of the provider, the following may also be sent:

- HES 101, Certificate of Immunization for each child, including the providers own children while in care; (If unavailable from the local health department);
- QAD 113 - Emergency Contact Forms;
- DPHHS/QAD 200- Pediatric Health Statement, for children 0-2 (if unavailable through the local health department).
- other miscellaneous technical assistance material; and

If a provisional registration is granted as a result of any action, including actions resulting from incomplete background checks, the provider will be sent a letter along with the provisional license certificate explaining

the reasons for the provisional status, what must be done to lift the provisional status and the time frame for completion.

References

Section 52-2-725 MCA
Section 11.14.103(5) ARM

Sample Letter

Date

Name
Address
City State Zip

Dear:

It is time to renew your day care registration/license. Your current registration certificate/license will expire on _____. If you plan to continue to provide day care, you must renew your registration/license. This office must receive your completed renewal packet by _____ in accordance with MCA 52-2-725.

"Renewal license--registration certificate. If a licensed or registered day care facility desires to renew a license or registration certificate, the request for renewal shall be made in writing, on forms prescribed by the department, in the county in which the applicant lives, 30 days prior to the expiration of its license or registration certificate."

Enclosed are the proper renewal forms for you to submit along with the checklist to assist you in making sure all necessary forms and information are submitted.

Please return your completed renewal packet to:

Name
Address

Incomplete and late applications will delay the renewal process. This may in turn delay payments for state-paid day care services or child care food program payments.

If the department does not receive the renewal packet back from you by

your certificate expiration date, we will assume you are no longer providing day care services and your certificate/license will officially be terminated.

If you need additional information, please contact the Licensing Program Administrative Support staff at_____.

Sincerely,

Child Care Licensing Administrative Support

DPHHS Policy Manual: Supplemental Care
Negative Registration/Licensing Action

Action

The department, after written notice to the applicant, registrant or licensee, may deny, suspend, restrict, revoke or reduce to a provisional license or registration certificate upon finding that the applicant has not met the requirements for licensure or registration as set forth in the rules. Examples of this include:

Facility Specific

- A day care center facility that is not in full compliance with fire safety requirements as determined by the state or local fire official;
- A day care center facility that is not in compliance with health sanitation requirements as determined by the state or local sanitarian
- A day care facility that is not in substantial compliance with registration or licensing requirements and such non compliance harms the welfare of a child(ren). Inappropriate child to staff ratio's, which could constitute a lack of supervision, is an example of this. Such determinations must be made by child care licensing staff in consultation with the program supervisor, bureau chief or division administrator.

Applicant/Person Specific

- An applicant, registrant or licensee that has made any misrepresentations to the department, either negligent or intentional; regarding any aspect of the operation or facility;
- An applicant, registrant, licensee, or staff member of the facility that has been named as the perpetrator in a substantiated CPS report of abuse or neglect; or
- An applicant, registrant, licensee or staff member, as a mandatory reporter has failed to report an incident of abuse or neglect to the department as required by Section 41-3-201 MCA.
- An applicant, registrant, licensee that has been convicted or adjudicated by a court of competent jurisdiction of a felony or misdemeanor as indicated in 37.95.109 (2)(a)-(b);

- Any registrant or licensee who keeps on staff, a person who meets the disqualifying criteria as outlined in 37.95.109.

Any person who is awaiting trial for a crime which constitutes harm to children or adults, or any felony drug related offense, may not provide care or be present in the facility pending the outcome of the trial.

In addition to the bullet points above, the following concerns can also be reason for negative licensing action, or can disqualify a person from providing care in a day care facility:

- If the department believes there is reasonable cause that an applicant or licensee or caregiver has a mental illness or emotional disturbance, which might create a risk to children in care. A licensed medical professional (such as a psychiatrist, psychologist or other licensed clinician) shall make this determination. The department may request that the applicant, registrant, licensee or caregiver obtain a psychological or psychiatric evaluation at the person's own expense;

- The applicant, registrant, licensee or staff member are chemically dependent upon drugs or alcohol. Chemical dependence on drugs or alcohol shall be determined by a licensed physician or certified chemical dependency counselor. The department may request the caregiver to obtain an evaluation at the caregiver's own expense if there is reasonable cause to believe chemical dependence exists.

Immediate Suspension in Emergency Situations

Immediate suspension or revocation can occur in the following situations:

- Local or state law enforcement has initiated a criminal investigation and the investigation involves allegations concerning harm to children;
- If non-compliance on the part of the provider a child in serious or imminent danger or harm,
- If there has been a report of child abuse or neglect from the department's centralized intake unit, local CPS office or local law

enforcement agency and the licensing staff investigation suggests there may be continuing danger or imminent harm to the children cared for in the home or facility

- If the department determines the health, safety or welfare of children at the facility or home is in immediate or imminent jeopardy.

Process

For an immediate order of suspension or revocation, the worker and the workers supervisor must first complete an affidavit in support of the immediate suspension or revocation. The affidavit must present the facts in their totality and show that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the children who attend the facility are in danger or imminent harm.

Once the affidavit is completed, the agency's legal unit will review the affidavit document and request the Hearings Officer, through a MOTION AND BRIEF, to order the immediate suspension or revocation.

Noticing the provider

Once the Hearings Officer has signed the MOTION AND BRIEF, the provider must be notified. In situations involving immediate suspension or revocation, the department must serve the ORDER and subsequent letter of suspension or revocation—which is signed by the program supervisor, or bureau chief or division administrator--to the provider in person. The initial documents may include a fax version of the original affidavits, MOTION, BRIEF and ORDER. If fax versions are served to the provider, the department *must* submit to the provider via certified mail, the original documents.

The worker shall not serve these document(s) to the provider unless at least one other professional person—such as another QAD Licensing staff, a CPS worker or a law enforcement officer--accompanies the worker to the facility. If children are in attendance at the time of the in-person notification, the worker will remain on site until all children have been picked up by their parents.

The Child Care Licensor will verbally notify ALL parents of the department's action. If the department cannot verbally notify the

Noticing the Parents

parent(s), then the Child Care Licensor (under the signature of the program supervisor) shall provide a letter to each parent who has children at the home or facility notifying them hat the license or registration has been suspended or revoked.

Suspension During Investigation of Abuse or Neglect

The worker will follow the same affidavit/motion and brief protocols outlined above for all suspensions of this nature.

Suspension or revocation during non-immediate situations

There will be situations, which warrant suspension, closure or termination, which are not immediate. In these cases, the affidavit, motion and brief documents are not necessary. It is only necessary to have a preponderance of the evidence (to be staffed by the worker and the workers supervisor) that the non-compliance warrants the action. The provider is to be notified in writing—via certified mail or hand delivered--of this action. Refer to Page 5-6 for specifics regarding notification letter content.

Resource and Referral

Because the R&R agency is responsible for referrals to providers as well as the management of the subsidy and training programs, it is important that certain information be shared.

The following information may be shared:

- General Information:
  The R&R agency may be informed when essential health and safety issues are a concern, but details may not generally be shared

- Investigations:
  The Child Care Licensor may reveal that an investigation is ongoing but the details of the investigation are not to be revealed. Policy section 815-15 addresses this information in more detail.

The Child Care Licensor may require the R&R to temporarily remove a providers name from the referral listing, pending the outcome of the investigation.

- Investigative Conclusions:
  The R&R may be informed that as a result of the investigation, the license/registration has been reduced to provisional or restricted status or that the license/registration has been suspended or revoked, except when the program has determined that the R&R needs to know the details of the action—such as for purposes of training or technical assistance. Otherwise, the program will not release details of the investigative conclusion.

If, as a result of an investigation, Training and Technical Assistance (T&TA) services are requested by the department, the department will notify the R&R of the deficient areas by releasing the corresponding deficiency notice. This document, while considered public information, should not be released as such from the R&R agency. The Licensing program is the entity to 'officially' release this information

Substantiated CPS Report

If the CPS investigation substantiates the report of child abuse or neglect, the license or registration may be suspended, revoked or reduced to provisional status depending on the circumstances of the particular case, pending CPS due process. If through the CPS due process (internal review, fair hearing, district court), the substantiation is upheld, the licensing program may terminate or revoke the day care license/registration or disapprove a previously approved caregiver.

Unsubstantiated Report either Licensing or CPS

If the report is unsubstantiated, and the registration or license has been suspended, revoked or reduced, the registration or license may be reinstated, subject to any other licensing actions, which may be necessary.

Written

Written notice shall be given to the licensee or registrant any time there

Notice is a change in status—such as a reduction, a suspension, a revocation--to the facility license or registration. This written notice is to be sent by certified mail or may be hand delivered. Actions resulting in immediate suspension, as addressed earlier, MUST be delivered in person. Certified mail is the preferred method, however, if the notice is hand delivered, the department must provide verification that the provider received the document. For example, the licensor should include at the bottom of the written notice, a statement that acknowledges the providers receipt of the information. This should be signed and dated by the provider.

The basic written notice should include:

- the reasons for the action,
- the specific rule citation,
- the person's right to appeal; and
- the fair hearing appeal procedure and process.

Hearing Any person dissatisfied because of either the department's refusal to grant a license or certificate, or the department's action in regard to a license or certificate may request a hearing as provided for in 52-2-726 MCA. The hearing must be requested within 10 days of receipt of the notice of closure, suspension, reduction or denial.

NOTE Parents are to be informed when a LICENSING action results in suspension or termination. Parents MAY be informed when other negative licensing actions occur. If the suspension or revocation is the result of a CPS substantiation, parents and the public are to be notified of the revocation or suspension action only. The Licensure Bureau will not release information pertaining to CPS investigations.

References

Section 52-2-702(1)
Section 52-2-703, MCA
Section 52-2-726, MCA
Section 41-3-201, MCA

DPHHS Policy Manual: Supplemental Care
Negative Registration/Licensing Action

Section 41-3-205, MCA
Section37.95.108-109, ARM

DPHHS Policy Manual: Supplemental Care
Drop In Care Protocol

Introduction

State law indicates that certain facilities are exempt from licensing and registration requirements. Among those are facilities who provide care on an *irregular basis--that is facilities caring for more than 2 children for periods less than 3 weeks.* These types of facilities are otherwise known as **drop in care facilities.**

Legitimate Drop in care facilities fill several needs not addressed by regulated providers: odd hour care, ocasional night care, child care for out of town visitors, intermittent shift care, and care for short periods of time allowing parents to run errands, exercise, etc. In many cases, drop in care is established for patrons utilizing an athletic club, a bowling alley, or attending a church service.

Facilities providing drop in services--as a means of practice-- are usually exempt from regulation if the parents of the children are in the same building as the children during the respective activities (i.e., exercise clubs, church service, etc).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline for child care licensing staff, the difference between a legitimately run drop in care facility, and a facility in which claims to be a drop in, but due to it's operation, needs to be a registered or licensed facility.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Drop in care may be distinguished from regular care by the following:

- intermittent, occasional care;
- numbers of hours a child attends is limited;
- limited number of children at one time;

They also limit the numbers of children which a single care provider can supervise. Most use the ratio's established by the state regulations governing child care staffing ratio's.

Assessing a Drop in Care Facility

In assessing whether a facility is operating as a legitimate drop in care program, staff must first consider the following points:

- How did the agency become aware of the programs existance?
- Is this a former provider?
- Has the person inquired at the area R&R Agency about becoming a licensed or registered provider?

investigative stage

When investigating whether a facility is running as a legitimate drop in, child care staff should physically visit the site.

When visiting the site, staff should always first announce their presence, show proper identification and explain the purpose for the visit. The following steps should be employed to determine whether the facility meets the criteria outlined in law for operation of a drop in care facility:

- enter into a dialogue with the person and thoroughly discuss the MCA--citing the definition of regular basis;
- count the number of children present;
- inquire as to the relation of the children to the adult;
- inquire as to the arrangements and frequency of care provided--in otherwords, does "regular basis care" exist?

Once your determination has been made, staff must inform the potential provider of the decision, both orally and in writing.

In some cases, a visit to the site may not be possible. In that case, a letter should be sent informing the operator that the department has become aware of the operation and that they could be in violation of state law. (See Sample letter at the end of this section.)

If it is determined that a facility operating as a drop in care program must be registered/licensed by state law, the department will respond as follows:

Agency Assistance

- Initiate a subsequent contact with the program to again explain

the requirements under state law;

- Send a memo reiterating this information along with an application packet--a deadline for compliance should be given;
- offer assitance in completing the application and arranging for necessary inspection;

Legal Action

If the program fails to comply with state law, the following legal procedures will implemented:

- Send the supporting documentation to the department legal staff with the request for local court jurisdiction intervention.
- Notice the Operator:
  - Operator will be notified of department findings, (i.e., "we have found that you are operating a day care facility without a valid registration/license certificate..."");
  - Of the agency's attempts to bring them into compliance; and
  - As result of the non-compliance, the program will request that the department's legal unit refer the matter to the appropriate local legal entity (county/district attorney, justice of the peace court, city/municipal court).

References

52-2-721, MCA

Sample Letter

DATE

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY, ST ZIP

Dear (name):

It has been reporteto this office that you are providing child care to three or more children on a regular basis. By Montana law, persons providing child care for three or more children on a regular basis must be registered (52-2-721, MCA). You may call (R&R) at (phone number) to request an application for registration.

The yellow application along with the other required paperwork that is included in the packet must be completed and notarized and returned to the Quality Assurance Division at (office address). If you need assistance or have any questions please contact me at (office phone).

Should you choose not to be registered, you must voluntarily cease to provide child care to three or more children on a regular basis. If you fail to register and continue to provide care to three or more children , it is my responsibility as the Department's representative to report operations of illegal child care to the County Attorney for criminal prosecution (52-2-741 MCA) and to request that you be enjoined from providing care until a registration certificate is issued.

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me at (406)--
.

Sincerely,

Child Care Licensor
Quality Assurance Division

DPHHS Policy Manual: Supplemental Care
Extended Licensing Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to explain to child care licensing workers the procedure for issuing a day care facility license or registration certificate beyond the one-year period.

History

Prior to the enactment of HB190 (which became effective October 1999), all day care facility license/registration certificates were issued for periods not to exceed one year.

The passage of HB 190, allows the department to issue a certificate that remains in effect for a period not to exceed 3 years. However, the legislation stipulates that in order to be granted the three-year license/registration certificate, a day care facility/provider cannot have received notice of deficient practices within the last survey process.

Procedure

The Procedure for issuing extended licenses will go accordingly:

- Newly registered/licensed day care providers/facilities will be granted a one year certificate. This one year certificate will give the department ample opportunity to assess compliance with the rules based upon observation;
- If after this first year period, the provider/facility has completed an inspection with no deficiencies cited, a 3-year certificate may be granted;
- In the event that the provider is deficient in some areas of the rule, but those areas do not pose risk of harm to the children (i.e., incomplete immunization records, lack of a master list, etc.), the worker *could* issue a 2-year certificate.
- Existing Providers-- Upon the anniversary date, (former renewal date) the provider will complete a request for the extended licensing option. Upon receipt of the request, the licensor will arrange for (within appropriate time lines and as workload allows) an inspection of the day care facility. If the provider is in full compliance with the applicable rules and

regulations, three year registration/license could be granted.

- As with new providers, if the existing provider is deficient in some areas of the rule, but those areas do not pose risk of harm to the children (i.e., incomplete immunization records, lack of a master list, etc.), the worker *could* issue a 2-year certificate.

Contract for continued compliance

Continued compliance with all applicable rules and regulations is required for any provider granted the extended license option. All providers, when given the two or three-year license must sign a contract for continued compliance. See form # ( )

The provider, through this contract will also agree to submit the following items on an annual basis:

- Insurance verification (upon an expiration date);
- Release of Information Forms and QAD-33 forms, TB and immunization records for newly hired staff (prior to beginning employment) and adult members of the household;
- Names and dates of birth of all household members;
- Staff Information documentation (centers only);
- Fire and health inspection reports (centers only);
- Other--as determined by the licensor.

Failure to provide this information and continual compliance with the applicable rules/regulations could affect the approval of the extended license.

Deficient Practice After Extended License is issued

If a provider who has been granted a 2 or 3-year registration/license, fails to maintain full compliance with the rules and regulations, the department can:

- Issue notice of deficient practice through the deficiency notice (and maintain the 2 or 3-year certificate);
- take other corrective actions (such as instituting a training program, directed plan of correction); or
- reduce the certificate back to a one year certificate. The latter should only be done when the deficiencies are such to put children at risk of harm. In these cases, the department

should also institute a plan of correction in conjunction with the provider.

Hearing Rights

Whenever the department reduces the 2 or 3 year registration/license, this is considered adverse action. Therefore, the provider has the right to appeal the agency's decision. Refer to the Fair Hearings Handbook for further instruction (or 11.2.201, ARM).

In notifying the provider of the reduction, the department must include instructions regarding how to apply for a fair hearing and the address at which to do so.

References

52-2-721, MCA (1999)
11.2.201, ARM

DPHHS Child Care Licensing Program: Day Care Complaint Policy

Purpose

Federal Regulations, [45 CFR 98.5(f), dated Thursday, June 6, 1991] require that a procedure for maintaining substantiated parental complaints be adopted by the Department as grantee of the Child Day Care Block Grant. This information MUST to be available to the public upon request. The following procedure for making and documenting referrals applies to the department staff and to Resource and Referral Agencies that contract with DPHHS.

Definitions

Complaint: the process by which a parent, guardian, or other interested individual, reports concerns regarding licensing violations or the care received by a child from a child day care provider.

Department: Department of Public Health & Human Services

Substantiated: upon completion of an investigation the Child Care Licensing staff and/or Community Social Worker determines that the allegations of the complaint occurred or are occurring.

Unsubstantiated: upon completion of the investigation, the Child Care Licensing staff and/or Community Social Worker determines that the allegations of the complaint did not occur, or is unable to make a determination due to lack of evidence.

CPS: child protective services.

CCL: the Child Care Licensing Staff of the Department of Public Health and Human Services.

R&R: the district child care Resource and Referral agencies.

CAN: child abuse and neglect.

Procedure

Complaints may be reported either to the local DPHHS child protection office, DPHHS licensing staff, or to an R&R agency. When a complaint is received by the Department, staff will obtain from the caller information about the incident and the name and phone number of both the complainant and the provider about whom they are making

the complaint.

DPHHS ACTION

If the complaint is a child protection issue, the DPHHS CPS unit will conduct an investigation. The investigating worker shall confer with the CCL their initial findings, and if necessary, make a formal request for negative licensing action pending the completion of the investigation.

The licensing program may decide to conduct a separate licensing investigation or conduct a joint investigation with the CPS social worker. If any negative licensing action is taken, the CCL will notify the local R&R to inform them of the action taken.

Types of Complaints

Complaints received will be documented according to the following two classifications:

1. child protection (CPS); and
2. licensing and registration issues.

A child protection (CPS) complaint refers to a complaint regarding abuse or neglect of a child. This means that acts or omissions of a child's parent or other person responsible for the child may harm or threaten to harm the normal physical or mental health or welfare of a child. (§ 41-3-102 MCA.) All reports of suspected abuse or neglect of a child must be reported by the R&R agency to the local CPS office.

A complaint regarding licensing issues refers to concerns, other than CPS complaints, regarding alleged violations of child day care facility standards, requirements, regulations, and the direct care of children at the child day care facility.

R&R Action

Ideally, R&R Programs should not receive CPS complaints;

However, when a call is made to the R&R agency office the staff person obtains all available information and documents that

information. If the complaint is a child protection complaint, the caller shall be encouraged to personally report the incident to department and is given the appropriate names and phone numbers to call. If the caller is a professional person legally mandated to report suspected child abuse or neglect, (i.e. doctor, teacher, day care staff) R&R agency staff will inform the caller that by law the referral must be made to the local child protection office.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the R&R agency staff will forward a copy of the complaint to the appropriate agency contact: for licensing issues the information will be sent to the local CCL and for CPS issues, information will be forwarded to the CPS intake unit for appropriate intervention. Referral of complaints will be made to DPHHS by phone with a follow-up in writing within 72 hours.

If there is a question whether the reported complaint is child protection or licensing, **it will be first treated as a child protection complaint**. Copies of the complaint will be automatically forwarded from the R&R office to the local CPS Intake Unit. The local child care licensing staff will also receive a copy for review of appropriate licensing regulations.

To prevent inadvertent referrals to an inappropriate provider, the R&R will be notified in writing of any negative licensing action (e.g. suspension, denial, revocation, etc.) taken against a day care provider.

removal from referral list

Depending upon the results of the investigation, a child care provider can be removed from the referral listing upon request by the child care licensor or other designated department staff.

A provider can be removed from the R&R Referral list for the following reasons:

- If the provider is under investigation by CPS;
- If the provider is under investigation by Child Care Licensing;
- If negative licensing has occurred as a result of either a CPS or Licensing investigation or
- As a result of other investigative findings which result in serious licensing concerns, but do not mitigate negative licensing

action.

Facilities with no current, valid registration or license shall not be referred. However, R&R agencies do offer referrals to LEGALLY OPERATING programs, such as preschools, afterschool programs, etc, who may not be required by law to obtain a license or registration.

The provider's facility will not be referred by the R&R until they have had contact from the CCL requesting referrals resume, or until the registration or license is restored to a regular status.

It is the responsibilty of the Child care Licensor to inform the child care provider his/her name has been removed from the referral listing.

Requests for information from the public

Any person wishing to know the status of a day care facility's license or registration certificate may call the local DPHHS office or District Child Care Resource and Referral Agency.

If negative licensing action has been taken against a day care facility, the public can be informed:

- That a license has been reduced to a provisional or restricted status;
- That a license has been suspended or revoked, pending the completion of a corrective action plan;
- the name of provider; and/or
- phone number of provider.

Substantiated complaints against a licensed or registered facility may be disclosed to a person requesting information on that facility. The nature of the substantiated complaint, (leaving child unattended, lack of supervision) may be shared but names or specific details **may not** be disclosed.

In cases when a complaint is made, but is unsubstantiated upon investigation, information pertaining to the nature of the allegations shall not be shared.

Confidentiality

Any information a caller gives in regard to a complaint must be considered confidential. Information is not be discussed with other persons unless authorized by department policy or Montana law i.e., licensing staff, child protection workers, etc.

In regard to informing Child Care Resource and Referral (R&R) agencies of licensing actions, the DPHHS worker may reveal that an investigation is ongoing. The department will notify the R&R that a license has been reduced to provisional, restricted or suspended status pending completion of corrective action plan, or that the license has been revoked.

When a referral regarding licensing regulations is substantiated and the allegations do not relate to child abuse or neglect as defined in 41-3-102 MCA, the licensing worker shall inform the R&R of the substantiated referral.

If as a result of investigative findings, the department determines that services under the Training and Technical Assistance program offered by the R&R agency are necessary, the Child Care licensor will share with the R&R staff the non-compliances found and an appropriate course or training will be developed. This information is to be considered confidential by R&R staff.

R&R staff shall not reveal details of any case involving child abuse or neglect or of licensing actions. Requests for details of licensing actions are to be referred to the local licensing office. All names of the child(ren) and the family must be deleted from the register that is available to the public.

Reference

45 CFR 98.5 (f)
Section 41-3-201, MCA
Section 41-3-205, MCA

DPHHS Policy Manual: Child Care Licensing Program
Locking Door Policy

Background:

In 2002, day care providers brought to the attention of the department rule number 37.95.121(14)(a). This rule states:

> *All facilities must have two accessible exits on each level that are unlocked when children are in care and are easily operable from the inside with a single action...*

This rule was established in order to: (1) allow unobstructed exiting in the event of a fire, and (2) to allow unlimited parental access.

It became apparent to department staff that the concern expressed by these providers involved personal safety. Specifically, providers were worried—particularly in our more populated cities—that by failing to lock the door, they would be leaving themselves (and the children) vulnerable to entry by persons who could harm them. However, in attempting to protect themselves and the children, they were violating the department rule.

It became evident to the department that the overriding safety concerns were paramount and a change in policy and rule was necessary.

Policy Decision:

Based upon further discussion with local fire officials and other key department staff, the Child Care Licensing Program has made the following policy decision regarding 37.95.121(14)(a) until such time as an amendment to this rule can be made:

• Citations of non-compliance regarding 37.95.121 (14)(a) will not be issued as long as the following contingencies are in place:

- Exit doors can be easily opened from the inside whenever the building is occupied for day care purposes;
- Locks, if used, shall not require the use of a key, a tool or special knowledge or effort to open from the inside. The door should be easily opened from inside of the facility regardless of what type of locking hardware is used. Appropriate types of locking hardware might include:

- Motel Locks— This is a lock, which has a deadbolt but is opened by a single turn of the handle;
- Push Button Locks—These are common locks and are routinely installed in residential structures. This type of lock encompasses a " button" within the door-knob. Pushing this button locks the door. To unlock one simply has to turn the handle (single motion).

- That installation of these types of locking devices will not prohibit access by parents. It is the provider's responsibility, if one of these approved locking devices are installed, to adequately inform parents and make appropriate arrangements with them for access to their children.

Example: An example of ensuring access might include using a door bell as the means to announce parent entry. The door bell must be audible in all areas of the facility in which day care is provided.

Giving each custodial parent or guardian a key to the 'day care lock' would also be an acceptable policy.

Important Note: **A deadbolt lock—other than a Motel type lock--cannot be used during the hours the day care is in operation. However, this does not preclude a day care provider from having a deadbolt lock installed for private use, when children are not in care.**

Questions concerning locking devices should be directed to the Licensure Bureau's Construction Consultant, Joe Merrill at 444-6794.

01/03